



CLEVELAND NIGHTS



RALPH JOHNSON

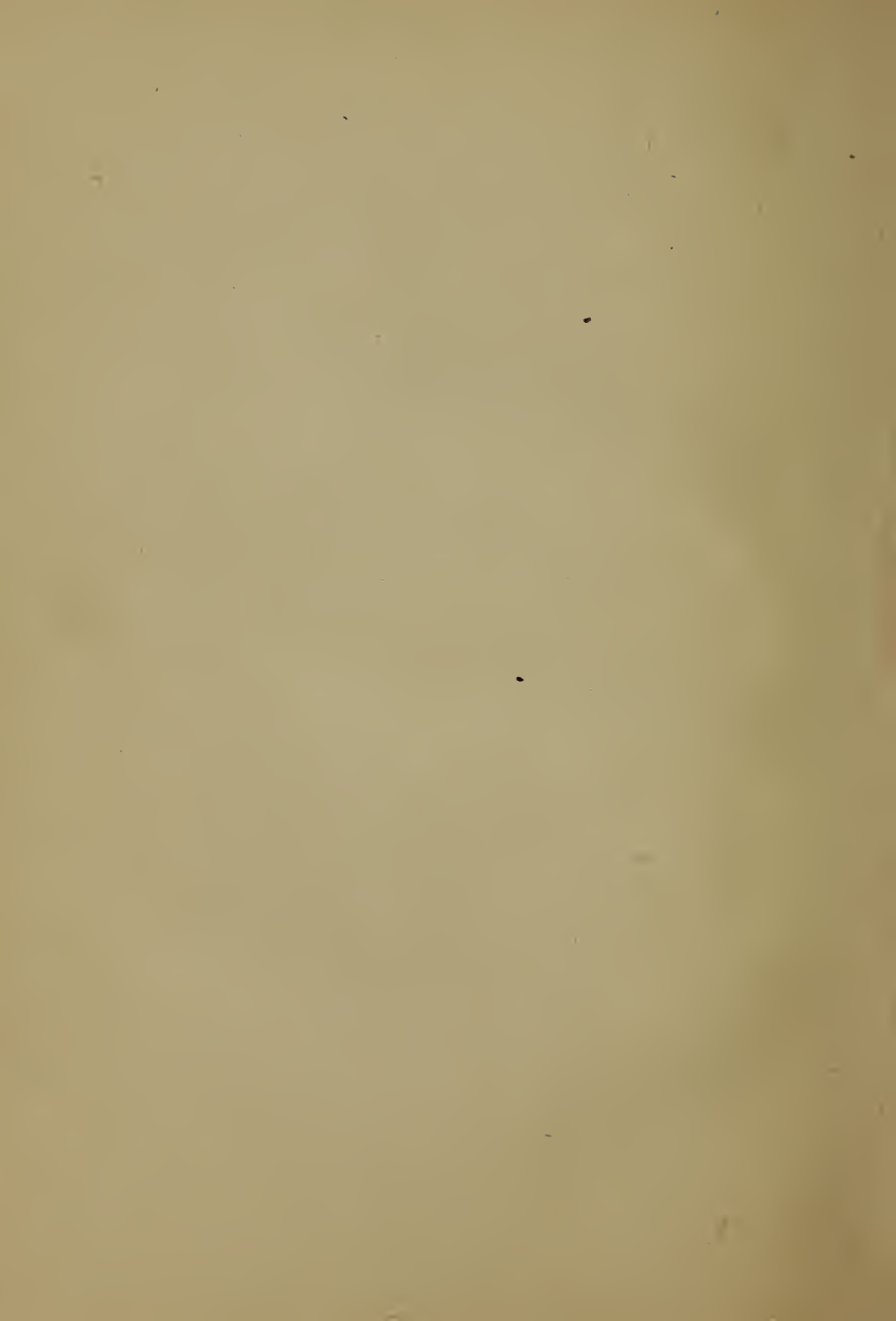


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- CLEVELAND NIGHTS

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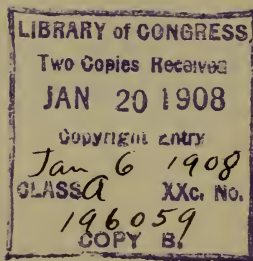
BY

RALPH JOHNSON

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TO M. A. M.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

THE PROLOGUE

From certain cultured homes in Cleveland town,
To Erie's blue, historic waves came down
Three youthful couples, in the month of June,
To spend in Gordon Park an afternoon.

They came to breathe awhile the perfect air
That winds from off the lake keep ever there,
And after they had sauntered two by two,
Laughing and jesting, as young people do,
'Cross grove-encircled lawns, through glen and glade,
In broad walks darkened by the oak trees' shade,
They reached the shore, and under willow trees
Sat talking, charmed by birds, the deep, the breeze.
Northward they saw the blue waves meet the sky
And laughed to see fish leap and catch a fly;
Themselves oft caught by water-fowl that o'er
The waters ev'ry summer fishing soar.
Eastward they looked; still rolled the waters blue
Save where a point of land hid their view.
Mere sand and trees, but distance, lake, and sun,
Made it appear a scene by magic done.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Westward they looked; again rolled waters blue.
Again a point of land part hid their view.
Mere walls and smoke, but distance, lake and sun
Made it appear a scene by demons done.
A lady in that lounging company
Turned from that view of Cleveland thoughtfully,
Gazed at the lake, as though to wash from sight
That stretch of hell ris'n through the water's might,
And thinking how would swelter soon her street
Her friends asked where they'd go to 'scape the heat.
Her question timely seemed to all the rest,
And ev'ry one his choice of haunts expressed.
One wished to England see, one France, or Spain,
One longed to wander in the Turk's domain.
One sighed for Rome, or the Aegean sea,
Another would an Alpine climber be.
At length a young man said: "Why should we roam
And fume and fret abroad? Let's stay at home.
Let's camp upon Lake Erie's bank, and be
A gypsy band, and live the wood-life free.
If you seek rest and comfort, surely these
Can't be obtained traversing plains and seas.
You love to be alone and crowds avoid;
Here sylvan solitude can be enjoyed.
Then, too, these countries we have rambled o'er,
But who has spent one day upon this shore?
How pass the time — amuse ourselves, you say?
On land we'll golf, cards, chess, lawn-tennis play;
We'll read, sing, bring our instruments and dance;
Turn naturalists and study birds and plants.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

We artists can in oil and water paint,
And sketch about this district subjects quaint.
When weary of the camp we'll board the yacht
And sail up-lake to some secluded spot,
There frolic till the rising of the moon,
And come home singing a Venetian tune.
Or, tired of sailing, in small boats we'll row,
And in the early morning fishing go.
Here we can swim, and after, on the sand
A sun-bath take by forest breezes fanned.
And thus on land and water, day and night,
I've promised you a sojourn of delight.
What do you say — long travels, or, with me,
A camp by Erie, 'neath the greenwood tree?"
There were objections and long arguments
Against this plan, but still in its defense
The young man battled, till they compromised,
And thus a scheme for pleasing all devised:
He should concede, that if they with him stayed
Though summer, underneath the forest shade,
He on a voyage in our winter time
Should go with them to some far sunny clime.
He, with a Cleveland winter scene in eye,
Its frozen lake, wind, snowdrift, leaden sky,
At once with them agreed, and they went home
To make arrangements for the days to come.
Equipment and utensils soon were got,
Which put in cars, they went aboard the yacht
And sailed for sunny fields and forests dark
On the lake-shore, and far east of the park.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Arriving there by setting of the sun,
Their tents were pitched and outdoor days begun.
And now I will describe them while they take
Their first night's sleep beside the starlit lake.

Hermes, now thirty, was the oldest of
This group that myth-like hid in groves to love.
He had an athlete's strength, and grace, and size;
His face was beardless, black his hair and eyes.
He bound fit for a king his novelists,
The epic bards, old English dramatists.
Young Marlowe the Magnificent was dear,
And plays anonymous some give Shakespeare.
Like Arden, Edward Third, York's Tragedy,
Which his no more are than the Odyssey,
He loved the stylists: Pater, Ruskin, Lamb,
Jonson and Johnson — that is Ben and Sam,
Rossetti, Swinburne, Chaucer, Keats and Poe,
And ballads written centuries ago.
Well could he draw and paint, and often went
Out sketching and in fields the whole day spent.
He now was painting a portfolio
Of Cleveland landscapes which were meant to show
The lake, the river, and the country near
As they with seasons changed throughout the year.
He was a master of the violin,
His technic ample for the thought within.
So versatile he played with equal skill
The Bach Chaconne, Tartini's "Devil's Trill,"
Bruch's First Concerto, and, a proof of art,
To gypsy airs could gypsy soul impart.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And when I add to these accomplishments
Great loftiness of soul, and love intense
For noble things, I have in part outlined
This young man in his manner and his mind.

Two years before these summer days he went
Upon a visit to the Orient.

While there he married an Arabian
Adopted by the chieftain of a clan.
She was voluptuous, tall, her name Gulnare;
She had black languid eyes, black glossy hair.
She loved to lie about, and loll and stretch,
And have a servant dainties to her fetch.

Her love of sensuous ease was thus displayed:
Before her bath her stalwart negress maid,
On the paved floor of her Alhambra room,
A bed made of red roses in full bloom.
After the bath the servant bore her there
And in the sunlight worked upon her hair.
There, looking at the blue sky as she basked,
She dreamily the negress often asked
In what particulars her form excelled
All those the white-capped critic e'er beheld.
The African half-chanted Gulnare's praise
In many a crude, but gorgeous-colored, phrase.
The song of beauty done, Gulnare surveyed
The ebon breasts and shoulders of the maid
And asked, with old-Rome cruelty, what sin
The negress would commit to have her skin.
The black smiled patiently and nothing said,
But looked as though conceiving actions dread.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The toilet o'er, across Gulnare she threw
A porous, gold-rimmed sheet of turquoise blue,
Arranged the lattice so no sun could peep,
Then tip-toed out and let her mistress sleep.

To keep her gracefulness, she ev'ry day
Her maid commanded Arab dances play
Upon a native mandolin she'd brought
From home, and had its use the negress taught.
Swift went her splendid body to and fro
Till ev'ry muscle throbbed from head to toe.
She was a fearless swimmer, and could run
So fast she ev'ry race with women won.
She hated study, and would never look
At any volume but a poet's book.

In old Kentucky, till his twentieth year,
Lived Horace from his birth, when he came here.
He had brown hair and eyes, a rugged build,
And was in ev'ry outdoor pastime skilled.
Since he could shoot, he savage beasts had slain
Among the mountains, and upon the plain.
He sometimes with his wife went west, and there
Killed Rocky mountain lion and Big Horn bear.
He also 'round Sandusky hunted duck,
And fishing in the lake or brook had luck.
He consequently knew what guns, canoes,
And dogs, rods, bait, and traps were best to use.
He was authority, and played in all
The many games in which we use a ball.
He loved a horse, and ev'ry morning read
The news of trotter and of thoroughbred.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

He loved the race-horse for the horse's sake;
Not for the name or money it can make.
In Cleveland this affection is not rare,
For thousands ev'ry Saturday repair
To Glenville, throughout summer, to behold
World's champions meet for ribbons, not for gold.

His wife was pretty, plump, good-natured, blonde,
Of music, dancing, plays, and dresses, fond.
Her name was Helen, her age was twenty-three;
She was the youngest of this company.
She was serene and confident, and knew
In all emergencies just what to do.
She planned the daily routine of their stay,
And set the hours by which to sleep and play.

Harold was beardless, blonde, with eyes of blue.
All books on criminology he knew.
Offenders, male and female, young and old,
From murderers, to those who merely scold,
He studied, for he liked to know what flaw
In mental-makeup caused them break the law.
He volumes had on suicide, and sex,
Degenerates, genius, and all nervous wrecks.
Upon another shelf all books had he
On therapeutics and telepathy,
Mind-healing, witchcraft, visions, ghostly signs,
And charts of magic circles, squares, and lines.
He studied martyrs, prophets, saints and creeds,
And infidels religion always breeds.

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From home with him to fields he often took
A pocket-size of some immortal book
Which sings the soul of man in solemn chords,
Whose theme is death, whose promise some dread
Lord's.

The Prayer Book, Emerson, Job's miseries,
Marcus Aurelius, Death of Socrates,
Patanjili, Blavatsky, Becket, Browne,
Light on The Path, Confucius, far from town
He sat for hours with such beneath a tree
And meditated on eternity.

He the piano played and practiced much.
Few men have better technic, tone and touch.
His instrument stood in the forest shade;
Here, when the moon arose, the comp'ny made
Him take his seat and Chopin's nocturnes play,
While they sat 'round, and outside, bright as day,
Saw sleeping, treeless meadows stretch afar,
And near the lake's horizon line a star.
He was a most poetic painter, too,
But mainly portraits, rarely landscapes, drew.

From Hungary came Anna, Harold's wife,
She was small, a handsome woman, full of life.
She read the wilder poets ev'ry day,
And gypsy music loved to sing and play.
Of singers Emma Calve she preferred,
And her Sautuzza, Carmen, often heard.
Though sprung from peasant stock, her form and
mind
Proved she traced back to ancestry refined.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

That she had breeding, thus was plainly shown:
She through field-labors beautiful had grown.
Her toil had been to her as exercise;
Had she been coarse this had been otherwise.
What should be small in woman, small remained;
What should be large, development had gained.
And the result was ev'ry sunrise shown
When to the lake, to swim, she came alone.
For, when on waters wide great lights advance,
And ev'ry bird its joy of summer chants
In, what her background was, the dense green wood,
On Erie's silver sand an hour she stood.
Facing the lake the black-haired, black-eyed Hun
Breathed deep the air made fragrant by the sun.
With hands on hips, inhaling, slow she rose,
Then held her breath, while, balanced on her toes,
She counted, mentally of course, to ten,
Then slow exhaling sank to earth again.
This exercise she many times went through,
And then did others, oft repeated, too.
First on one foot, then on the other, she
Rose high and waved her arms alternately.
She then bent forward till upon the sands,
With both knees rigid, she could put her hands.
Erect, with hands on hips, feet firm on ground,
She twisted, from the waist up, half way 'round.
She then from shoulders shot her fists with vim,
Decreasing till she cooled enough to swim.
And musing, while thus cooling in the shade,
She thought how beautiful her form was made.

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And though for years this was her morning sight,
She in herself, each day, found new delight.
What firm abundance of delicious flesh
Had this brunette, all glowing rosy fresh!
How wholesome was she! Morning winds that
played

Against her, come from flowers, were sweeter made.
What Asiatic air of opulence
There was about her dark magnificence!
What colors, pink, and copper, dusky, warm,
Were in her cheeks, and nude voluptuous form!
She studied from all sides her grand design,
Its southern pomp, its female, curving line.
Then with a loud, glad cry, as though just freed,
She ran into the roaring lake, full speed.
Of course the soul is first, but Anna thought
Up to her soul her body should be brought.
A task gigantic, for her soul was pure,
And just as lovely as her form mature.
But year by year she daily persevered,
E'en though the end in view she never neared.

This was the company that summer spent
Beside Lake Erie, happy and content,
Indulging in those sports on lake and land
Which, ere they started, Hermes for them planned.

Now, Hermes, while on rambles through the wood,
Had tamed a squirr'l, to which he carried food.
When he was in the forest, and but called,
It came and saucily about him crawled.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

It feared the dogs at camp or it had come
And made among the company its home.
One day, at sundown, having fed his pet,
On ent'ring camp he none but servants met.
And asking for Gulnare, and looking 'round,
While being told, he saw her on the ground
With others, reading in the drawn-out shade
The setting sun against a lone oak made.
This tree upon the high land's north edge stood.
Far east of them their tents showed through the
wood.

To west and south spread open fields, hemmed round
By forests dense in gray-blue vapors bound.
While eighty feet, sheer down, beside them rolled
The shoreless lake, its west end red and gold.
The comp'ny dropped their books and gazed upon
The lake, nor moved their eyes when light had gone.
There was not much to see, but much to feel.
Each o'er his soul let twilight's influence steal.
In this mood Hermes joined them, and he too,
In silence, stood the darkening lake to view.
But suddenly across the inky deep,
From over trees, pale light began to creep.
A large red moon rose dwindling and grew white,
The sky was cloudless, all was still and bright.
In black and silver now the water lay;
Beyond the fields the wood loomed blue and gray.
"How bright it is!" said Helen as she took
From off the grass, to test the light, a book.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

This book was hers: "Tales of a Wayside Inn."
She read with ease where'er she might begin.
"Let's see another, Hermes," then she said,
And Harold's "Canterbury Tales" she read.
"Another!" Helen cried. He gave her three;
Gulnare's "Arabian Nights" was plain to see.
A Bret Harte book, with Anna's name inside,
Was read by Helen as she were lynx-eyed.
The book of Horace: "Plain Tales from the Hills,"
Could not prove Helen suffered eye-sight ills.
"So you were reading stories," Hermes said,
"While I at sunset my pet squirrel fed."
"Yes," Helen answered. "To me came a whim
To read a tale beneath this great oak's limb.
When I told this the company all said
They'd do the same, and so we came and read."
Then Hermes said: "This is a night of nights,
And to outdoor amusement one invites.
Since you're so fond of stories let us stay
And tell some on the grass. What do you say?"
Gulnare observed, since Helen saw so well
There was no need for them a tale to tell.
Let Helen read, her voice was low and clear,
Which made whate'er she read a joy to hear.
"How kind of you!" said Helen, "but my sight
I prize too much to read by this false light."
"No," Hermes said, "let me a plan explain.
Of our vacation four more nights remain.
Let's all tell stories thus: first we three men,
Then you three women, then we men again,

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And so, in order, till the tents come down,
And we return, I hate to say, to town."
Anna protested that she knew no tale
That would the company at all regale.
Gulnare demurred, suggesting, as before,
That Helen read; but her trick failed once more.
The rest with Hermes willingly agreed,
And he dictated how they should proceed.
None to the comp'ny should "a tale unfold"
That he to any there had ever told.
Each might relate what had been read, or heard,
Or might invent if so to do occurred.
As the majority believed this fair
They made surrender Anna and Gulnare,
Chose Hermes Monarch of these Cleveland Nights
To rule supreme when all heav'n blazed with lights,
Gave him a chair for throne, before which they
Beneath the moon, as pleased them, sat or lay.
And then he, at the comp'ny's wish, began;
And thus, in stately style, his story ran.

THE FIRST NIGHT.

GODFREY AND GWENDOLYN.

All this befell in England, long ago.
Ladies, methinks no story has more woe.
Not that of Romeo and Juliet,
Of Pyramus and Thisbe, nay, nor yet
Sweet Isabella of the Basil-pot,
Nor that wherein is chronicled the lot
Of Hero and Leander; nay, none of
These legends is more steeped in tragic love.
During the War of Roses, red and white,
When York and Lancaster did fiercely fight,
Godfrey, whose emblem was the York's white rose,
With several passed among his red-flow'r foes
On way to battle. In this town were none
But women, and few men whose strength was gone,
For all the warriors of the city then
Were distant, fighting Godfrey's conqu'ring men.
But had the place full of opponents been
He none the less its streets had ridden in.
For brave, and powerful, impetuous,
Was Godfrey who the city entered thus.

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Young was he, well proportioned, tall, and straight,
Knightly he looked when he his charger sate.
Brown were his eyes, and brown his curly hair,
Beardless his face, and his complexion fair.
Honest his eye, and all his friends knew well
Honest his deeds, and speech that from him fell.
Now, as he slowly cantered down the street,
A maiden from her castle him did greet.
He stopped, bade his friends pass, he'd them o'ertake,
And bared his head for honor's lordly sake.
The maid asked quietly what he could say
Of her brave sire, then fighting far away.
"Fair lady, of your sire I nothing know,
But where he battles I this morning go.
And this I promise you: whoe'er I slay,
Your sire I'll spare if he comes in my way."
"I asked no mercy, yet, may you it find.
How does my sire was all I had in mind."
Then parted they with courtesy, and love,
Yea, first-sight love was theirs, and fears thereof.
Their Houses were at enmity; small hope
Had they to win, with much they had to cope.
Godfrey went forth, deep thinking on the maid
Who was so beautiful, so rich arrayed.
Her hair was golden, tall was she, blue-eyed;
Modest her gaze, her movements dignified.
Godfrey went forth, his kinsmen joined and fought,
But Gwendolyn's sire found not, though he sought.
All day he mused on her; at eventide
Back did he boldly gallop to her side.

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With cunning, then, he entered, where to go
Was death if any should his presence know.
Full gladly Gwendolyn her love received.
Happy were they, they vowed and were believed.
Till morn did agitated England light,
When Godfrey slyly left again to fight.
In changing moods the lady her time passed —
When glad she thought each hour might be his last;
When melancholy this she drove away
In thinking of the sweet things he did say.
Once longed she to go to her mother's side,
There kneel and take her hand, and then confide
That she was mightily beloved, and loved.
Surely her mother would thereat be moved,
And with nobility stroke her girl's head
And say: "Where two so love they should be wed."
But Gwendolyn said naught. She knew the rage
That followed when she spoke of marriage
With any but Sir Wynd, then off at war,
Her mother chose, when battles all were o'er.
She nothing said, but, saddest of all maids,
Sat in her room till fell the evening shades.
Then in the garden did she walk, perchance
Some ease to find 'neath the moon's radiance.
Long time about the garden had she gone
When she saw Godfrey coming, not alone.
He walked, and with him she a friar could see,
And both she in her room let secretly.
And then the lovers answered "Yea," to those
Deep questions that joined rivals of the rose.

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Rewarded, then, the friar they sent away.
The moon was down, yet was it far from day.
Then Godfrey said he would with her remain,
And in the morning to her dam explain.
'Twas like, since they were married, she'd forgive
Her deadly foe and peaceful all would live.
If not, no matter. Godfrey's kin were kind;
Among them Gwendolyn would favor find.
Not now he'd tell her mother; from her door
She might them drive to wander on the moor.
Far was his home, 'twas night, they had no steed.
Rude men were out, to travel day they'd need.
Himself feared nothing, but base prowlers might
His love abuse when him they'd slain in fight.
Thus did he reason watchfully and long,
And Godfrey's argument to her was strong.
And, like all loving brides, young Gwendolyn
Was glad his couch to share, and they went in.
When they had lain awhile the lady woke.
Sleep Godfrey held. Then did she soft invoke
The Heav'nly Pow'rs that when the morning came
Her mother in her naught would find to blame.
And as she prayed full piteously she heard
The noise of one who on the stairway stirred.
Fast beat the heart of Gwendolyn with fear.
"O, God of Mercy, send them not in here!"
So thought she frantic, and once more the sound
Of one descending steps broke peace all 'round.
What should the lady do in her distress?
Instinctively she threw on her night dress,

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Left Godfrey sleeping, ran along the floor
Five rooms away, and hid behind the door.
And as she stood there, unto death afraid,
Her mother came in sight; with her a maid.
Together walked they, keeping step, and slow,
And in where Godfrey slumbered both did go.
Frowning the mother whispered to the maid:
"You're certain he's of York before us laid?"
"Yes," said the servant. "Though all naked now,
I know 'tis her York lover by his brow.
Twice have I seen him; each time plain his face;
I know it is the man she did embrace."
The mother raised her arm; one stab — he's dead.
White as his rose he came; she left him as hers, red.
The devil mother and the hell-hound maid
Left knife and light. They needed not its aid
To find a screen and hide. "She will return,"
The devil-mother said, "what's happ'd to learn."
When they had gone, as thought poor Gwendolyn,
For utter darkness now the fiends were in,
She stole out of her hiding place; one hand
Upraised as though she silence did command
Unto herself, for fear she might recall
A witness to her act by her footfall.
Her mouth wide open was, her eyes did stare.
Something had passed, but what, in that light's glare?
Slowly she glided toward the dreadful room;
Her mother watched and cursed her in the gloom.
First did she pause ere entering, for she
Began to feel there was great woe to see.

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Then entered, and seeing Godfrey on the bed,
Her girl's heart burst — she fell across him, dead.

So came these solemn phrases to a close,
And properly, as every woman knows.
Death won the speechless listeners to his side;
By tragedy they had been purified.
From first to last, they, in this tale, could see
The march triumphant of Necessity.
And in a chaste and lofty frame of mind
They sat subdued, nor blame nor praise could find.
To Harold Hermes nodded, meaning he
Was next to speak. He did so readily.

LION'S HAIR.

Within a city where I used to live,
The name of which I do not wish to give,
There dwelt an ancient fortune-telling dame,
Whom, like the city, I'll omit to name.
I'll call her Tawny Tess. I knew her well.
She really could a fortune rightly tell,
And might have easily become a seer
Without, I think, in any land a peer,
Had she to tell the truth been satisfied.
But, though she saw the truth she often lied.
She lied maliciously; to set at strife
A maid and youth, a husband and a wife.
And he cannot progress in any art
Who gives expression to a lying heart.

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Hence, though she could foresee, a spell, or charm,
She could not work to benefit or harm.
Had she spoke truly what she saw unveiled,
In any magic she had never failed.
But still in sorcery she persevered,
And hearing that a maiden was endeared
Of one whose father had denounced her art,
She set about the maid and youth to part.
For many months strange images she made,
Drew circles, fasted, perfumes burned, and prayed.
But toiled in vain; she could not separate
The lovers, all unconscious of her hate.
Perplexed, one day she journeyed to consult
A sister deeper far in the occult,
Who wrote what ceremonies, drugs and speech
She had to use, the end in view to reach.
At home she drew the paper forth and stood
Beside an open window, mutt'ring "Good!"
At each direction on the written page.
But at the last her face grew black with rage.
She thought her friend a trick on her had played.
Among observances to be obeyed,
That she might separate the loving pair,
Was, do a certain thing with lion's hair.
But where in her town find a lion caged?
This was the problem that the witch enraged.
Now, as she from the window gazed in thought,
Believing plans to part the lovers naught,
And plotting vengeance for her friend's deceit,
She dreamily perceived across the street

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A poster, bearing pictures of a clown,
Announcing soon a circus due in town.
She read mechanic'llly the time and place,
And then a smile came o'er her wrinkled face.
She did not smile in fancy at the things
She would behold in acrobatic rings;
She didn't mean to go — she never went
To any show, in theatre or tent.
She smiled for deeper reasons; they were these:
With ev'ry circus are menageries,
And in them lions, and from them she'd get
The hair with which to part the lovers yet.
The circus came to town. Our sorceress
At night put on the usual widow's dress,
Delayed until the crowd was in, and then
Within the beasts' tent sought the lion's den.
Save for attendants lounging here and there,
Beneath an arc-light's moth-surrounded glare,
This tent was empty, and how still beside
The main tent where the crowd laughed till it cried.
The sibyl, smiling, strolled past many lairs
Where paced, or slumbered, tigers, leopards, bears,
Indifferent, soon as she, with look aslant,
Determined what its savage occupant.
But, peering forward down the sawdust lane,
She at the end, in gloom, made out a mane.
She instantly the lion recognized;
All intervening cages were despised.
Before the king of beasts she took her place,
The guard rope held, and pleased, stared in his face.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

He seemed to dream of Africa when he
And Rhodes disputed for its empery.
A lion won, but it adorned a crown.
His jungle soon became an English town.
And now he was a wandering, public sight.
This is the end of kings that England fight.
The sibyl looked about her. None was near.
Then turning to the lion with a leer
She quietly, aloud, began to name
The lovers, and half mentioned why she came.
She then, by hissing, caught the lion's eyes
And tried, by gaze, the brute to hypnotize.
She wished to cause him rise and near her stand
When she would clip his mane with shears in hand.
The lion, dreaming still on Fate unkind,
Felt something hellish tampering with his mind.
He quickly of its source became aware
And on the woman cast an outraged glare.
He then leaped to his feet, and roared so loud,
The sibyl, like the apes about her, cowed.
This cage was in two sections, and between
The two compartments ran an iron screen.
A little door was in it, and through this
The keeper came to see what was amiss.
He bade the beast be still, then came outside,
Stood near the woman and her closely eyed.
She to the keeper no attention paid,
But smilingly the animal surveyed.
The keeper didn't know her, but he knew
The lovers, and the harm she meant to do.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

For, hidden in the farther cage, each word
She spoke on coming he had plainly heard
But, wishing of her mission sure to be
Before he acted, he walked leisurely
Up to her side and said: "Because the light
Is wretched here the beast is cross tonight."
The woman, thinking he believed this truth,
Conceived the keeper a most simple youth.
But as the fortune-teller he was wise;
He knew she'd tried the beast to hypnotize.
The woman turned and on the keeper beamed;
All things propitious for her venture seemed.
Here were the lion, time, and place and man!
She needed but to speak, and thus began:
"I have a friend who has for ten years lain
Abed, an invalid, in constant pain.
Physicians say they're helpless — she must die,
But now a remedy myself will try.
I have a little skill in cheating death,
And have in man and animal kept breath,
And eased their suff'ring with a homemade brew,
When doctors for the sick could nothing do.
The remedy I mean to use is old;
I of its merits long ago was told.
I have informed my friend. She is content
That I upon her case experiment.
I've all ingredients now, excepting one,
And that omitted, nothing can be done.
That necessary thing is lion's hair,
And for a handful I will pay you fair.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The keeper said he wanted no reward
For trifles that would ease the ill afford,
But would himself a goodly sum expend
To make two persons suffer as her friend.
He now began to lie, and watched her eyes
To see how she'd behave before his lies.
He named the lovers carelessly, and said
The girl had often promised him to wed,
But jilted him, and now, if he but knew
A secret way, great harm to both he'd do.
Hopes for their deaths he fervently expressed;
The witch's tell-tale eyes the like confessed.
The keeper saw it. Then he saw her eyes
Grow calm as she began to sermonize.
She warned the youth that heavenly pleasures wait
The mortal filled with love, not filled with hate.
Then smiling blandly, with a virtuous air
She once more asked the youth for lion's hair.
The keeper then commanded the adept
To follow, and inside the cage they stepped,
The farther section entered, closed the door,
And, in the gloom, saw stretched upon the floor,
His back turned toward them, breathing slow and
deep,
A giant lion, seemingly asleep.
"Now," said the youth, "there is no cause for fear,
He will not stir. Kneel at his head and shear.
I'll wait outside and watch, and when I cough
'Twill mean a person near. You then leave off.
And when you've clipped sufficient from his mane
Cough twice and I will lead you out again."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The witch agreed, and showed no nervousness;
As bold as she was vile was Tawny Tess.
The keeper came outside, and stood before
The cage, and gaped in like a visitor.
He heard the scissors snipping; then a rush,
A growl half-choked by cloth; then came a hush.
Then something slammed against the bars as though
He with a club had struck the cage a blow.
He heard a crunch. Two women wandered by.
The keeper coughed. He had a watchful eye!

The foremost lion started. Ah! that scent!
He rose, and bounding to the cage-end went.
Then, as a bird-dog points, peered through the screen.
He thought of home, a maid, a valley green.
He turned and watched the keeper, saying plain:
"How comes it he has jungle days again?"
He then strode forth, demanding this same thing
With one great roar that made the cages ring.
"Lie down!" the keeper said; a gesture made.
The lion sulked, but in the end obeyed.
He gazed expectant, and then jealous, when,
Unarmed, the youth stepped calmly in his den.
The keeper smiled to see his pettish look,
Passed to his partner's cage and from it took
A bonnet, pair of shoes, a skirt and shawl,
And then behind the tent in straw burned all.

This tale of Harold's some discussion raised.
The keeper was in turn denounced and praised.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And after telling other anecdotes
Of witches, like old Cotton Mather quotes,
Hermes to Horace turned and said: "Begin,
It is your turn. A western story spin."
Horace unlucky was tonight, for he
It seemed, had sometime told the company
His choicer stories; so, light-heartedly,
He improvised this gay absurdity:

A BALLAD OF JESSE JAMES.

As Jesse James and his merry men
Sat under the greenwood tree,
All playing a game of Indian dice,
"I am very dry," said he.

And he slaked his thirst at the forest spring
That bubbled cool and clear,
And said: "For your sake, gentlemen,
I wish the brook ran beer.

For, though I only water drink,
The sight would gladden me
If you sat 'round with tin-cans full
Of the beer of St. Louee.

And had I but the red, red gold,
A bar'l of it I'd buy
That you might also slake your thirst
Who sit about so dry.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

What shall we do for gold, my men?

For gold what shall we do?"

So to his men spoke Jesse James,

And all his words were true.

Bob Ford, he up and laid his ear

Upon the railroad track.

He could not hear, faroff, a train

That hauled the money-sack.

Jim Cummins nimbly up and laid

Upon the rail his ear.

But, in the distance, long pay-trains

Approach he could not hear.

Cole Younger up and laid his ear

Upon the steel rail then.

But, in the distance, heard no train

That brought home rich ranchmen.

"Have done! Have done!" cried Jesse James,

"Have done and follow me.

We'll go and rob a bank this day

In the town of St. Louee."

And he is mounting his good black horse,

Astride of his horse is he.

And he and his merry men now start

For the town of St. Louee.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And over the hills, and over the plains,
Rides Jesse James so bold,
And when in the town beside a bank
Bold Jesse cries out: "Hold!"

And all the foaming steeds stand still
In the sunlight in the street,
And Jesse James jumps from his horse
And five names does repeat.

The five bold men jump from their steeds
And are at Jesse's flank.
And now, with Jesse at their head,
They go inside the bank.

Bold Jesse to the teller runs,
(A coward vile is he),
And puts his pistol 'neath his nose
And "Hands up!" cries Jesse.

The five good men that Jesse chose
The same to bank-clerks do.
Each man in that bank now looks in
A Colt's revolver true.

And when the coward-loon bank clerks,
And mongrel teller, too,
Were covered by these brave bandits
Bold Jess a whistle blew.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Off from his foaming steed that stood
In the sunlight in the street
A bandit young jumped with a sack
To store the red gold sweet.

And he is now inside the bank,
From safe to safe he goes
And gathers in the red, red gold
And bank-notes piled in rows.

And this sack, and another sack,
And one more sack he takes,
And on the horses' backs this gold,
With ropes, secure he makes.

As with the fourth sack he came in
Sharp Jesse heard a groan.
He bade the bandit young look 'round
To see who made that moan.

The bandit searched and found inside
A private office there
A woman very old and bent
With thin and silv'ry hair.

"O, spare my life!" the woman cried.
Kind Jesse said: "We will!
We only come for the red, red gold;
We do not come to kill."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"And yet you may as well kill me!"

The woman said with tears,
"As take from me, a widow lone,
The hoard of thirty years."

"What is that sum?" kind Jesse asked.

"O! eighteen dollars," said she.

"What rate of interest do they pay?"

Inquired the just Jesse.

"But four per cent," the widow said,

" 'Tis all these rogues will give."

Jess stood amazed. Then cried in wrath:

"Why let I these knaves live?"

The low-born, base-bred teller craved

His life from grand Jesse.

Strict Jesse then the bandit asked

How much in bag had he.

"Eight thousand dollars," he replied.

And then said Jesse: "Add

Ten times the interest that is paid

By this bank-teller sad.

And change that heavy gold to bills,

She's old and much can't lift."

And to the widow then that bag

Was handed as a gift.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Friend of the poor, you're truly called,"
The widow sobbed for joy.
And the bandit tells his pals outside
To give her no annoy.

The bandit then nine empty sacks,
He takes and goes inside
And in the sacks puts what is left
Within those vaults so wide.

And covering still that teller vile,
And those vile bank-clerks too,
Bold Jesse James and his bold men
From that bank quick withdrew.

And he is mounting his good black horse,
Astride of his horse is he.
And he and his merry men now go
Through the town of St. Louee.

Then did that coward teller shoot,
But Jesse is unharmed.
Bold Jesse never can be killed.
For why? His life is charmed.

"Go call the sheriff of this county,"
The mongrel teller said.
A butcher went to do the same
But instantly fell dead.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Upon this butcher was no mark,
And all men marveled much.
They did not know Good Fortune won't
Let harm bold Jesse touch.

And through the town rides Jesse James,
His gallant men behind.
And presently a brewery
These valiant bandits find.

And all the foaming steeds stand still
In the sunlight in the street.
The brewer sees them and comes forth
This gallant band to meet.

"I know you well," the brewer cries,
"I know you well," says he,
"And what can I do for true, tried men
That come to visit me?"

Bold Jesse James he up and says—
Afraid of naught is he:
"I come for to buy a bar'l of beer
For my thirsty company."

The brewer then he up and says:
"I will not take red gold,
But I will give a bar'l of beer
To men that are so bold."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"O, harness a team of jacks," he cries,
"And put a bar'l in a cart
And haul it away to the dark greenwood
For men so staunch of heart."

Then Jesse flings out bars of gold
At children in the door,
And though the brewer bawls: "Leave off!"
Kind Jesse won't give o'er.

All harnesed now is the team of jacks,
A bar'l is put in a cart,
And now away for the dark greenwood
The driver makes a start.

And Jesse is mounting his good black horse
Astride of his horse is he,
And he and his merry men now go
From the town of St. Louee.

And over the hills, and over the plains,
Rides Jesse James so bold,
And when they come to the dark greenwood
Brave Jesse cries out: "Hold!"

And all the foaming steeds stand still
In the shadow of the wood,
And they dismount and share the gold
As honest outlaws should.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then up and comes the driver proud
With the beer of St. Louee.
And there they drink to Jesse's health,
All under the greenwood tree.

Quoting odd lines, and laughing heartily,
The comp'ny left their "story-telling tree."

THE SECOND NIGHT.

'Twas afternoon, the blue sky had no cloud,
The dark blue, white-capped lake was roaring loud.
Beyond the reach of spray, on silver sand,
Beside a wall-like bank on which oaks stand,
And through the yellow sides of which protrude
The ends of roots, in shade and solitude
The women rested after swimming long,
Watching the lake in golden sunlight strong.

Upon her knees, and sitting on her heels,
Cried Helen: "Oh, how nice the cool wind feels
Against one's body!" Then she held her hair
At arm's length on each side, to let the air
That heavy, wavy fleece of gold go through,
Which was so thick it hid her face from view.

Gulnare lay on her side. Her face was hid,
And ev'ry now and then she Anna chid
Who by her sat, and who let through her hand,
As through an hour glass, fine, crisp tickling sand
Upon the Arab's waist, and each time swore
That she Gulnare like this would tease no more.

At dusk said Anna: "So you wish me tell
A gypsy tale this evening? Very well."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

'Twas Ladies Night and she took Hermes' chair
And thus proceeded with a lively air:

ZENTA DOBRA.

As the sun sank over Dresden,
And the twilight settled gray,
Ehrhart Bendel and his father
Left off plowing for the day.
As they walked behind the horses,
With the plow upon its side,
"See the gypsies in the forest!"
To his father Ehrhart cried.

"Stop the horses and come with me,"
Old man Bendel said in wrath,
And they left the horses grazing
On the grass beside the path.
As they cut across a pasture
They could hear the pots and pans
Of the gypsies being taken
From the four-horse covered vans.

"Put them back!" old Bendel shouted
As he came upon the camp.
"Put them back! Hitch up! Keep moving!
Beat that fire out there, you scamp!
Do you hear me?" went on Bendel
As a fire for cooking blazed;
"Thieves ain't welcome here," he bellowed,
While the gypsies stood amazed.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"What's the matter?" asked Chief Shandor
Of the gypsies. "Who's robbed you?"
"Makes no difference," answered Bendel,
"That is what you mean to do.
I pay rent on this here forest
And I work to pay the rent;
I don't swindle for a living,
And no swindlers here can tent."

While old Bendel raved, Chief Shandor,
Feeling it were best to go,
Thought of some reply like vitriol
In the farmer's face to throw.
So he said: "What! You're a tenant?
Why, I thought you owned the place;
We don't camp with vulgar tenants,
That to us would be disgrace.

"I was told you owned this forest
But were miserly, and, still,
Though you didn't need the money,
Would just like a laborer till.
Well, be honest, frugal, civil,
Leave the girls and beer alone,
And perhaps, before you'r ninety
For yourself you'll something own."

Poor old Bendel's rage was awful;
He went looking for a club,
Telling Ehrhart to do likewise
And the gypsies help him drub.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Ehrhart held him. "Stop! they're going,
Father, calm yourself," he said.
Then the old man fell to cursing
Till his face as fire was red.

While he raved Chief Shandor ordered
Horses hitched and vans repacked,
And stood watching with enjoyment
Bendel like a mad-man act.
Ehrhart counted twenty horses,
Scores of children, fifteen men,
And among their wives one maiden
That he wished to see again.

One by one the wagons started.
"Straight ahead!" Chief Shandor cried,
And a youth brought up a saddler
For the Romany Chief to ride.
Then the youth climbed on a wagon,
And with howls, and oaths, and jeers,
They departed, leaving Bendel
In such rage he was in tears.

"At my time of life," he muttered
To himself as he went home,
"To be told I should be honest;
May God's judgement on him come."
Here he took the lines from Ehrhart,
To the horses shouted: "Whoa!"
Then he asked: "Am I dishonest?"
Ehrhart, driving on, said "No!"

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

From the forest to a pasture,
Went the gypsies far away,
Where of old a wealthy widow
Often let the wand'ers stay.
She took pity on the lordly,
Happy, swarthy race in tents,
And described our persecution
As "The White Man's insolence."

In the morning two young women
To the widow Shandor sent
With some trinkets and his blessing
That she left them with her tent.
The he summoned Zenta Dobra;
On a bench, beside a van,
Both sat down and to the maiden
Thus the gypsy Chief began:

"Now, my Zenta, did you notice
That young Bendel look at you
While he held his silly father
Lest we break his head in two?
No? You didn't? Well he watched you
Like that Count in Wien who said,
When you danced: 'Here, take my diamonds
For a kiss.' You shook your head.

"Now this gentile is as smitten
As the Count, who, when denied,
Left the concert-hall, I saw him,
And committed suicide.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Though a woman, you're a gypsy;
Whites can't lead astray, I mean.
Well, now go and ruin this Bendel
As you did the Count in Wien."

Shandor left her. She rose also,
With a bag to gather wood.
Near old Bendel's farm a building
Part completed, idle stood.
As she sauntered toward the building,
Wondering how her point to gain,
She beheld her victim, Ehrhart,
Coming toward her down a lane.

Then she dropped her bag and folded
Both her hands against her heart;
'Cross her mouth came an expression
As though tears were like to start.
Then she rolled her eyes to heaven,
And with half-averted head,
"Please don't kill the poor, poor, gypsy,"
She with touching pathos said.

Ehrhart stopped within ten paces
Of the girl who stood like stone.
Never once her black eyes shifted
From the sky to meet his own.
But her thoughts while standing meekly
Only fish-wives would repeat.
Ehrhart studied her wild beauty
From her head to pretty feet.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

She was buxom, lithe, and tawny,
In two braids hung her black hair;
Rings adorned her ears and fingers,
Head and shapely legs were bare.
Yellow was her swelling bodice,
Her short skirt was red, black bound;
Her white waist revealed grand shoulders,
Her bare arms were large, firm, round.

As he watched he grew embarrassed;
'Twas his turn to speak he felt.
Had he followed his first impulse
At the girl's feet he'd have knelt.
But he thought a stern demeanor
Was the proper attitude,
So he said: "What's in that bag there?"
With a voice and manner rude.

Now the bag lay flat and empty,
And he saw his speech insane,
And poor Ehrhart's mental torture
To the gypsy girl was plain.
So in Romany said Zenta:
"O, the idiot! O, the ass!"
Then the empty bag she fingered
And above it made a pass.

"What's that foolishness?" asked Ehrhart,
His composure part returned.
Zenta smiled, her arms akimbo,
And her eyes with mischief burned.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"O, a spell I've just been working;
I said: 'Sheep run home unharmed.'
I'd a bag-full when you caught me,
But away from here they're charmed.

At this nonsense Ehrhart chuckled,
And began to walk away.
He kept pausing as if wishing
He'd a good excuse to stay.
Yet to stay he thought were folly,
For his brain was in a whirl;
"I'll talk foolishly," thought Ehrhart,
"And be laughed at by that girl."

"Where you going?" Zenta asked him,
As he walked away at last.
Ehrhart turned and said at random:
"O, to make the sheep-pen fast."
"Pooh! my magic can break sheep-folds,"
Zenta, tittering softly, said.
Ehrhart answered: "Well, I'm anxious
If those sheep you charmed are dead."

"And I'm anxious," Zenta shouted,
"If those sheep got home at all;
If they havn't then us gypsies
Into prison you will haul.
Something tells me to go with you,
Count your sheep and make you say
None are missing. May I do so?"
Ehrhart stopped and said: "You may."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Running, whirling, kicking, laughing,
Zenta romped to Ehrhart's side.
With such grace, strength, speed and passion
He ne'er saw a girl supplied.
She'd a motive for her actions;
'Twas to make her hot blood course
Yet more hotly, that her aura
Might exert a greater force.

Zenta felt her black-blood boiling
Conquer Erhart's placid white,
As in raging, muddy rivers
Snow is soiled and borne from sight.
To her body his was yielding,
In her arms he longed to be,
But she knew he loathed this longing,
For his mind as yet was free.

But, as she had won his body,
So his mind she now would gain,
Hence at Ehrhart she kept looking
As they rambled down the lane.
Zenta used no girlish simpers,
Didn't flirt and wasn't coy,
But by brief thought-loaded glances
Helped resistance to destroy.

She would ask the youth a question;
When he looked to make reply
She would give it no attention,
But upon him fix her eye.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

For to be a perfect actor
You must think of what you do.
Zenta couldn't mind his answers
And bedevil Ehrhart too.

Ehrhart turned away first, always,
And each time he turned he thought,
Not upon the transformation
In his nature being wrought,
But upon the eyes of Zenta.
What was in them? What behind?
Such an eye as that of Zenta's
He'd ne'er seen in womankind.

It was large, and black, and brilliant;
So was many a woman's eye,
Yet it couldn't fascinate him
As this Zenta's did. And why?
Gypsy women's eyes are "pointed;"
They have "corners" like a bird's;
And the Rom he'd never studied,
Nor with them had he had words.

"What's your country?" Ehrhart asked her.
"I'm Hungarian," she replied.
And my name is Zenta Dobra."
He no further questioning tried.
And she didn't him enlighten
As to age, which was eighteen,
Nor that she had never married,
And her beau was jailed in Wien.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Thus they walked, the young, fair German,
Honest, calm, not worldly-wise,
And the dashing, dark enchantress
With the true witch-pointed eyes.
Presently said Ehrhart, pointing:
"There's our sheep-fold." Then began
Bells, on far off steeples, ringing,
And the help to dinner ran.

"Wait," said Ehrhart. Zenta noticed
Happy smiles upon his face.
"While they eat I feed the horses,
Then I'll show you 'round the place."
Zenta watched him feed the horses.
Suddenly his clear cheeks flamed,
For the first time of his duty
In his life he grew ashamed.

Yes, this half-dressed, unwashed gypsy
Had a mind so proud and strong
That he thought his manual labor
In her presence was quite wrong.
He believed he should have sauntered,
Being careful where he walked,
And of Dresden social happenings
In a grand-duke manner talked.

Zenta saw this and despised him.
"Now the sheep! Let's count the sheep!"
So she said and toward their pasture
She began to run and leap.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Suddenly she swerved and gambolled
Toward a sandy fenced-in lot;
Here she stopped and cried to Ehrhart:
"O, what pretty pigs you've got!"

She spoke truly, they were beauties,
And were kept in proper style.
Zenta looked at them with longing,
Then proceeded with a smile:
"They are pretty, very pretty;
Hear them squeal! Ah, ain't they sweet?
Still I'm glad I'm not a gentile
For their flesh I'd hate to eat."

"Why?" asked Ehrhart. "Full of devils,"
Zenta said with wat'ring mouth,
"Then you're like the Jews, you gypsies?"
Said the knowledge-gathering youth.
"Why, we are Jews," answered Zenta,
"We're the lost ten tribes of old."
But, since gypsies sprang from India,
One more lie was grandly told.

Zenta then looked at the porkers
With a strange, half-frightened eye.
"What's the matter?" questioned Ehrhart.
"Why, these shoats are going to die.
Don't you hear them squeal?" asked Zenta.
"They're just hungry," Ehrhart said.
"No, they're ill. Too bad," said Zenta,
And walked off with shaking head.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Come, let's count the sheep," she ordered.

"They're all right," he said. "Now go. Men are coming." "Well," said Zenta,

"That they're safe I'm glad to know. May I have some wood?" asked Zenta.

"Fill your bag," the youth replied.
"Thanks," she said, "I'll come tomorrow,
Just to see if piggies died."

She stole off and hurried homeward.

"What's the news?" Chief Shandor said.
"Very good," she answered, bending
Till the bag fell off her head.
"Soon we will have pork for dinner,
All of it that we can eat.
He's a yard full. I tomorrow
Promised him again to meet.

When the tow-head isn't looking
I'll take care they get their drow.
I've prepared his mind to lose them,
Then we'll get them, listen now.
I'll command him not to bury
His dead pigs, but lay them by
Till a doctor has discovered
What affliction caused them die

You be handy. When he leaves them,
Then in barrows wheel them off.
That same evening have the doctor
Here to cure a horse's cough,

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

So this Ehrhart cannot find him.
When he misses all his hogs
I'll convince him, when I meet him,
They were eaten up by dogs.

He will never blame us gypsies;
I said pork we do not eat.
And that I'd do harm for vengeance
In his skull you could not beat.
In a week he'll steal me diamonds;
He is easy to make daft.
But to get things for the present
I will have to use some craft."

Then "Hurrah! for Zenta Dobra!"
Cried the gypsies gathered 'round.
"How's his horses?" questioned sev'ral,
"Has he many? Are they sound?"
"Where's his hen-coop?" asked another.
"O! the fire for dinner light.
There is wood he gave," said Zenta.
"We will get the rest all right."

Ehrhart, soon as Zenta left him,
Gladly went about his work.
He aspired to be no dandy
And the toil he lived by shirk.
But to work seemed disrespectful
While with Zenta, that was all,
As a woman leaves off dusting
When the preacher pays a call.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then he went to plant potatoes
All alone and he was glad.
To himself he new impressions,
Dreams, and magnetism had,
As when coming from great music,
We are happy not to meet
Sordid worldlings, giggling gossips,
At our house or on the street.

In the evening he remembered
'Twas the night his girl to see.
But he thought: "The devil take her!
All alone I want to be."
Lena was the girl in question,
She'd grown famous making cheese.
She was fat, blonde, tricky, jolly,
But a dangerous girl to tease.

In his room he sat comparing
Zenta to his dairy-maid.
He despised her fair complexion,
And her hair, one thick gold braid.
On her matronly proportions
He reflected with a curse.
"Lord!" he cried, "so fat and cow-like.
When we're married she'll grow worse."

Ah! how different Zenta Dobra.
How she curved, and swelled and spread!
Here protruded! there receded!
And what grace in ev'ry tread!

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Yes! Long chases by policemen,
Open air year in, year out,
Scanty meals, a born fine figure,
Zenta kept from being stout.

Lena, too, was tame as butter.
O, she'd fight. So would a bull.
Zenta made him think of whisky,
And of devil was as full.
So he mused. Alas! poor Lena.
Then he saw his violin.
Instantly the gypsy's mouth-piece
Ehrhart placed beneath his chin.

Ehrhart took three lessons weekly
From a master in the town,
Who advised him take one daily,
Then go forth and win renown.
But his mother wouldn't listen.
"No!" she cried. "Home let him stay.
Only God knows what strange women
He will meet while he's away."

Tuning up he stood deciding
On a perfect gypsy air.
"Rakoczy" flashed out. 'Twas natural.
Here's your Rom without compare.
Then he played from Brahms, and Hubay,
In a witch-aroused control,
Then he improvised, imbuing
Ev'rything with Magyar soul.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

He grew tired, locked up his fiddle.
 'Neath his room rang cheers and shouts.
"Hey! Play 'Lauterbach'," was ordered
 By a crowd of country louts.
He undressed, and thought this folk-song
 Boorish, flat, unsexed and cheap.
Nay, so seemed all gentile music.
 With these thoughts he went to sleep.

In the morning Zenta Dobra
 Met the lad. Her hair hung down.
It lay full of burrs and grass-leaves
 On her lovely shoulders brown.
For the first time Ehrhart noticed
 That her hair curled at the end.
He said nothing, gladly off'ring
 Service to his unkempt friend.

"Yes, come help me; by the hedge-row.
 I slept in a field all night.
Just lay down where sleep o'ertook me.
 Never felt so fresh and bright."
Yes! She went to tell a fortune.
 Twenty peasants chased her, armed.
She escaped, hid in a thicket,
 Then came where she'd not be harmed.

By the hedge-row, all deserted,
 Far from toilers on the farms,
He sat down. She knelt before him,
 Bending low with folded arms.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

To him then he drew a lapful
Of her tangled hair, blue-black,
And while picking burrs kept looking
At her broad, plump handsome back.

To him came a silly notion.
She in mind, eye, walk, hair, hue,
Differed from a gentile woman.
Would her flesh taste different too?
He'd find out. He'd kiss her shoulders.
They were temptingly in place.
He leaned over. Quick as lightning
Zenta slapped him in the face.

"Going crazy?" Ehrhart asked her.
"No," she said, "you pulled my hair."
Their positions stayed unaltered.
He resumed, but with more care.
Subtle Zenta! She abhorred him,
And was pure as driven snow,
But that she'd permit no fondling
She would never let him know.

Ehrhart slyly wiped off tear-drops
Zenta's slap had caused to start.
And kept thinking on her action
While he pulled her hair apart.
She did right, he freely granted,
If she knew his trick or not.
But he hoped she didn't know it,
And his cheeks with shame grew hot.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Now, the burrs, and meditations
On his foolish, slapped-for deed,
So engaged him, to a witness
Of his work he gave no heed.
But behind the hedge, and peering
O'er its top "Old Adolf" stood.
He was noted as a gossip
In the farming neighborhood.

He was tall, fat, bearded, sixty,
Stingy, very pious, bluff.
He'd retired from active farming,
Didn't drink, swear, smoke, take snuff.
He would walk about the village
And the house-wives working hail:
"Why, I thought you washed on Mondays?"
Or "Schmidt's wife"—and tell a tale.

Dreadful life, and dreadful creature!
From the hedge-row home he stole.
He had meant to see a neighbor
And with "news" relieve his soul.
But this "news" was more important,
For more trouble it would cause.
"Ah!" he thought, "when Lena hears this
Won't that Ehrhart feel her claws!"

He found Lena making butter.
He sat down. It was too bad!
How he hated to speak evil
Of so nice and good a lad!

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then he told what he had witnessed,
Ending with this master-touch:
"There's some more, but it would shock you.
I talk plain, but that's too much!"

Lena heard him through in silence,
Then still churning answered: "Pooh!
That is old. Why don't you gossips
Come around with something new?"
But she thought: "Each word is gospel,
And I'll even up tonight."
Adolf left and thought with pleasure:
"Won't they have a glorious fight!"

Zenta had grown weary kneeling,
Bending down, and now she sat.
She leaned back, her arms braced rigid,
And her hands extended flat.
Far apart, stretched straight before her,
Lay her mud-stained limbs. She smiled,
Looking at them o'er her bosoms,
Thinking of her night-chase wild.

Ehrhart standing worked behind her.
Suddenly the church-bells rang.
"Ah!" said Ehrhart, "I've just finished."
To her feet the gypsy sprang.
In to dinner ran the farm-hands.
Ehrhart watched them. Then he said:
"Wonder if those pigs are living?
They by this time should be dead."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Yes," said Zenta, let's go see them.
Are they dead?" He answered: "No."
"If they die," she said, "their bodies,
Let's say, by that corn-crib throw.
Tell you why. A plague is raging.
Do not bury. Call a Vet.
Have him diagnose their illness,
And a disinfectant get.

This I say for self-protection.
Yesterday poor mother came
Weeping, saying: "Hogs are dying.
None know why. We'll get the blame,
Even though we do not eat them
Wantonly, they'll say, we kill.'
And, though yours appear so healthy,
They will die. I know they will."

Speaking thus they reached the hog-yard,
By the squealing shoats they stood.
Zenta begged, to make them quiet,
He'd prepare their mid-day food.
Just to please her he would do so,
'Twas another's work, he said.
He went off and brought some skim-milk.
"Look," said Zenta, "by that shed."

"Why?" asked Ehrhart, "Was it father?"
While he stared alarmed, she drew
Poison from a handy pocket
And it in the skim-milk threw.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Say," he said, "you'd better scamper."

"Yes," she said, and ran away.

Then he fed the shoats and horses

And to town went for the day.

Now, while shopping in the city,

It occurred to him to see

What the book-stores had on gypsies.

"I will study them," thought he,

"Learn their customs, laws, and language,

Then to Zenta I will say:

'Let's get married. I'm a gypsy.'

And with her I'll go away."

Youth is full of curious notions.

Ehrhart then a book-store sought.

Half a dozen books on gypsies

He was shown, and promptly bought.

Then a catalog was shown him.

"Order these," he named a score,

"And," said he, "don't fail to write me

If you hear of any more."

"Aren't those plenty?" asked the salesman.

(Perfect fool). For then said he:

"You've a mighty strange affection

For those villians, seems to me."

This drove Ehrhart to a frenzy.

From the clerk he moved away.

He might strike him. He said: "Cancel

What I've ordered. Sir, good-day!"

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"See that fellow," said the salesman
To a farmer, Ehrhart's friend,
But whom Ehrhart hadn't noticed.

"His sane days are at an end."
Then he told of Ehrhart's order,
And the farmer told his wife,
Who that afternoon told Lena
She'd be sorry all her life.

Then he sought another book-store.
He went in. This clerk was fine.
"Yes, sir, we of works on gypsies
Have, I think, a thorough line.
What we're out of I will order;
We've branch houses 'cross the sea.
You will take these thirteen volumes?
Charming folk, the Romany.

Now, our large-size, colored pictures
Of the gypsies you have seen?
Please come here. We have all nations.
Just Hungarian? Seventeen?
Forty dollars is the total.
And your name? Gus Oudrichsen?
(Wrong address for fear of parents.)
Charge and send them? Call again."

Not till having left the book-store
Did he think to ask this man
For his card. He liked his manner.
Yet it seemed they called him "Van."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

This he scribbled in a note- book,
Then went in a music-store.
Here he purchased gypsy music,
"Just Hungarian," as before.

Home he went. Twelve shoats had perished.
By the crib he threw them all.
He said nothing. In the morning
He'd suggest a Vet. they call.
He was busy; he had music.
This he played till evening came.
"Now," he thought, "I'll go see Lena,
And to Gus explain my game."

He to Lena's house went whistling
"Czardas," bought that afternoon.
"Those fierce, syncopated minors
Make look sick a gentile tune."
So he thought, as into Lena's
"Butter-house" he went and found
Lena churning. "O," she giggled,
"Now I'll stop, since you've come 'round."

"No," he said, "keep right on churning.
I have got to call on Gus."
"Wait," she said, "I'll tell your fortune.
We'd a gypsy call on us,
And she taught me how to do it."
He sat down, surprised and vexed.
He thought Zenta was the gypsy.
Then he said: "O, Lord, what next?"

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Just come here," said Lena, laughing.
"By the lamp; hold out your hand."
"O, quit fooling," answered Ehrhart,
"You those things don't understand."
"You come here." She went and pulled him
To the light. "Let's see your palm."
This he showed while by her standing.
Lena then proceeded calm:

"Yes, according to your life-line
Not another day you'll see,
For the very simple reason
That you'll now be killed by me."
By the throat she quickly clutched him,
Grabbed a cheese-knife from a shelf,
And then held him till he perished,
Then to jail she went herself.

Soon as darkness well had settled
Gypsy men filed down the lane,
Stole the shoats which could be eaten,
For the drug hurts but the brain.
In the morning Zenta Dobra
On the road a farmer met.
He related what had happened
And said law on her he'd set.

Home she ran and screamed: "I'm ruined!"
Then rolled, tearing up the ground.
"Wait!" roared Shandor to her mother,
Who for stones went looking 'round.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Zenta, by the woman's hissing
Saw they thought she'd been betrayed.
Up she leaped before they killed her
And an explanation made:

"Ruined in the purse! He's murdered!"
"Come, strike tents!" Chief Shandor cried.
"How you scared me!" said her mother.
Virtue is the gypsies' pride."
Then the gypsies left the city.
Not for days they drove a stake.
But the first day that they tented
Zenta ordered made a cake.

"Why?" asked Shandor. "For that Lena,"
Zenta answered: "Drug it well.
Oh! that wicked, heartless woman!
Just as he was in my spell!"
They consoled her. It was cruel.
Never mind. Don't cry, don't cry.
You'll find far more wealthy gentiles
Just as 'easy' by and by."

"Here's your cake, my stunning darling,"
Soon explained a bent, black hag.
Zenta, now in gentile garments,
Put it in a jeweled bag.
In a large red hat, white feathered,
With a green, black-dotted veil,
Parasol, red, high-heeled slippers,
Zenta went to town by rail.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

To the prison she went boldly.

Asked the sheriff: "May I see
Lena Kùh. I am Miss Buhdel."

Oh!" he gasped. "Why certainly!"
For the name she used was mighty.

To the cell she then was shown.
Then the sheriff paced the hallway,
Leaving both the girls alone.

"I'm Miss Buhdel. In the papers
I have read what you have done.
Do not worry. I'll get lawyers,
And will see your case is won.
I am certain we will free you.

You, of course plead self-defense,
Say this villian of an Ehrhart
Tried to rob your innocence."

"No, he didn't," said poor Lena.

"With a dirty gypsy thing
Adolf saw him." Zenta wanted
At the fool's fat throat to spring.
"If," said Lena, "he'd been tempted
By a fine, big girl like you,
'Twould be natural. Yet with acid
I'd have burned her eyes out, too.

But a cloven-footed gypsy!

Devil's daughter! Scum of earth!
This of course proved I'd been loving
One who was of little worth.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

For a man who'd kiss a gypsy
Would a dreadful husband make."
"True," said Zenta, from her handbag
Drawing forth the poisoned cake.

Then said Zenta: "Here's a dainty.
I've been told this prison fare
Is quite meager. Please accept it.
Of your case I will take care.
I take interest in the humble,
As you know. Good-bye, my dear.
Stick to self-defense, now, won't you?
. I am sure we'll get you clear."

In the office she said: "Sheriff,
You of course heard what I said.
I perhaps by sight of suff'ring
Past good judgment there was led.
For this girl I can do nothing.
Of my call say nothing, pray.
Did you hear her mention acid?
Has she got some? No? Good-day!"

Still to Lena went the Sheriff.
She had finished Zenta's cake.
"Didn't you," he asked her sternly,
"Reference to acid make?"
"Yes," she said, and then to spite him:
"I have swallowed some! Why not?
I am guilty, but you'll never——"
But no further Lena got.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

She died silently and quickly.
Doctors called it suicide.
Had some person smuggled poison?
"No," the Sheriff true replied.
But he cursed the prison matron
That she'd Lena searched so ill.
He "Miss Buhdel" never mentioned;
She had asked him to keep still.
Zenta shopped about the city,
Waiting till the press came out.
Though she couldn't read, the newsboys,
She believed, the death would shout.
Soon they did so. Home went Zenta.
Camp at once the gypsies struck,
All congratulating Zenta
On her nerve, and skill and luck.

"But, spite of this, we like the gypsies still,"
Said Hermes. Then, "Gulnare, now if you will
An Oriental tale of magic tell,
Like your 'Arabian Nights' we love so well,
Why, you'll delight us all." Gulnare in vain
Could recollect a story of that strain.
At last she said: "I'll tell a story of
A jealous man and how one died for love."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

THE BEAR AND THE LOG

Years ago two married couples
Went a-hunting in the West.
I won't name the very region,
For I do not think it best.
It was near the Rocky Mountains.
That is vague, but it must do.
And new names I'll give the hunters,
Ev'ry one of whom I knew.

Call one couple Frank and Bessie,
And the other George and Belle.
They were young, good-looking, clever,
And they shot and roughed it well.
In a valley near a river,
They had pitched their two-room tent,
And from this each morning early
They on hunting journeys went.

One day, lounging after dinner,
Rose a shout of joy from Frank.
He beheld their old friend Candon
Coming down the river bank.
Frank, delighted, ran to greet him.
He was camping near, he said.
Years had passed since they had seen **him**
And they talked till time for bed.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Candon left them, joined his partner,
And retired but could not sleep.
All that night he thought of Bessie
With a love as vain as deep.
Long he'd known her in the city,
And had liked her more or less,
But mere fondness leaped to passion
In the girlless wilderness.

Big, blonde Bessie did look charming
In her boyish hunting suit.
She wore khaki knickerbockers,
And a knee-high leather boot.
She'd a flannel shirt, wide open
At the chest, a cartridge belt,
Sleeves were rolled up to her elbows,
And her soft black hat was felt.

Candon rose next day at sunrise,
And sat thinking what to do.
He was well aware that Bessie
As the sun that shone was true.
Once he thought to leave the Rockies,
Then concluded to remain.
He had often conquered women
When to do so seemed in vain.

Then he roused his sleeping partner,
Put an oar in their canoe,
And to Frank's they went for breakfast
As kind Frank had asked them to.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

They discovered Bessie broiling,
And at table Candon took
Ev'ry chance to flatter Bessie
On her skilfulness as cook.

This, of course, bored Frank and Bessie,
But they acted unconcerned.
Belle, through envy, changed the subject
Of his praise, but he returned.
After dining, they went shooting.
Candon stayed at Bessie's side
And to her and Frank's amusement
Ev'ry want of hers supplied.

This was nothing new to Bessie;
She had maddened men before,
And the actions of the "puppies,"
As she called them, calmly bore.
Fools her free, gay, romping manners,
Sometimes, fool-like, misconstrued,
But without a word, look, action,
•She made gentle men from rude.

But though Frank knew well that Bessie
Would in time without a scene,
Teach the caddish Candon manners,
And he need not intervene,
Him the cheap knave's actions rankled
As no man's had done before.
And to get some kind of vengeance
He in secret firmly swore.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

After several days of shooting,
And of wrath in consequence
On the part of Frank, for Candon
Daily grew in impudence.
They, one morning, went off fishing
Leaving Bessie, George and Belle,
Cleaning rifles, writing letters,
Telling friends that all was well.

"Where's your partner?" Frank asked Candon,
Walking by a canyon's side.
"O, home reading; we don't need him,"
Candon snappishly replied.
"Yes, you blackguard, now act sulky."
So thought Frank. "I know you're glum.
When you asked me to go fishing
You thought Bessie too would come."

Here they left the deep, steep canyon,
With a river in its bed.
And into the woods that fringed it
Candon his companion led.
They had taken twenty paces,
Single file, when Candon cried:
"Here's a bear!" and then ran, leaving
Frank behind a tree to hide.

"Fine, true comrade!" Frank said, sneering,
Watching coward Candon run.
And Frank wasn't very sorry
Candon didn't have a gun.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

For he thought each second Candon
 Would be captured by the bear
As he sought (as Frank was certain)
 Some secure and selfish lair.

Just as Frank had fancied, Candon
 Shelter found for his dear hide.
Near the canyon lay a hollow,
 Ten-foot log, and two feet wide.
Into this bold Candon scrambled
 As a rat into its hole.
Then Frank heard his muffled shoutings
 That he come and save his soul.

Frank stood still and watched the grizzly
 Try to reach his dearest friend.
Failing at the point of entrance,
 Bruin went to the other end.
Failing here the big brute often
 Pushed the log completely 'round.
Seeking, as he did so, openings
 In the log, but it was sound.

"Ah!" said Frank, with satisfaction,
 And picked up a weathered stick
Like the barrel of shot-gun—
 Just as long and straight and thick.
Placing this against his shoulder,
 With a calm, deliberate air
He went slowly, as if aiming,
 Toward the unsuspecting bear.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Fifty feet were still between them
When to make the beast look 'round,
Frank, still sighting cool and steady,
Stamped his foot upon the ground.
On his haunches sat the grizzly,
And he merely turned his head,
And retaining this position,
"Aw, now don't!" he growling said.

Frank stood aiming like a statue,
Studying the monster's eyes.
He beleved the brute was waiting
To attack him by surprise.
He imagined that the grizzly
Knew his rifle was a sham,
And the bear was calmly bluffing,
As a wolf might bluff a lamb.

Frank soon found he was mistaken,
For the bear faced round and reared,
"Aw, now don't!" he kept on saying,
Then backed off and disappeared.
When he reared, Frank saw his stomach
Bore a gun-wound partly healed,
And through fear of guns, Frank fancied,
He for mercy had appealed.

When the bear left, Frank stole forward.
Candon had not ceased to call.
"Aw, now don't!" Frank kept repeating
In the bear's deep, weary drawl.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And as he had seen the grizzly
Roll the log, so now did Frank.
Off the canyon's edge he shoved it;
In the river deep it sank.

Frank went home and told the others
That the bear pushed Candon in.
They believed him. But he fancied
He saw Bessie shrewdly grin.
Belle deplored the thing as "dreadful,"
But no tears that day were shed.
And when Frank told Candon's partner:
"No great loss," was all he said.

The act of Frank much comment caused, and then
Said Helen: "Not for women only, men
Will show their demon side; see how a mare
Cost many lives, and laid a country bare."

A BARON WILKES FILLY

One bright, lovely summer morning,
On his rear veranda wide,
Major Nyle sat rocking, smoking,
Looking o'er the countryside.
Far off "niggers" sang in cornfields;
Sang the birds in road-trees shade;
Deep in pastures grazed prize cattle;
Mares and colts in paddocks played.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Major Nyle was big and handsome;
Wore imperials streaked with white.
He was candid, breezy, genial,
And his creed was: "Treat men right."
He was judge of horses, whisky,
Guns, and women, and he said
Never showed he better judgement
Than the day he "mother" wed.

"Mother," cultured, proud, was reading
In a cool, light room upstairs.
Their one daughter, large, dark, Ellen,
Sang and played old southern airs,
She played softly, but with passion,
For her thoughts were on her love,
Allan Dale, then out of city,
And who lived "three farms above."

She had finished "Juanita"
When she heard a deep voice say:
"It's no wonder Allan loves you.
How's my black-eyed queen today?"
Colonel Dale stood by the window,
Big and beardless, genial, too.
Ellen crossed the room and answered:
"Quite well, thank you. How are you?"

"Same as ever," said the Colonel.
"Here's some flowers. How's your ma?"
When "ma" told him he asked Ellen:
"How's your darned old race-horse pa?"

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then he chuckled, listening sharply.
Laughing loud, cried Major Nyle:
"Come around, you old coon-hunter;
Come back here and smoke awhile."

Back he went. "Here take this rocker,"
Said the Major. Then he cried:
"Deacon! bring cigars and whisky."
"Yes, sir," soft the black replied.
"Here's your health, sir!" "Here's to you, sir."
"First-class liquor, Major Nyle."
"I believe so. Have a light, sir,"
Said the Major with a smile.

"Well, sir, what's the news this morning?"
Cheerily asked Colonel Dale.
Major Nyle said: "Best news going
Came here in this morning's mail.
Got a letter from my trainer,
Down in Memphis, telling me
That my filly went a quarter,
Yesterday, in thirty-three."

"That ain't Mabel?" said the Colonel,
"That bay filly, coming three,
With the star and white hind fetlock?"
Said the Major: "Yessiree!"
"That's a twelve gait," said the Colonel,
And that's trotting, Major Nyle.
But, now don't you get hot-headed,
She can't keep that clip a mile."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"What's the reason, my dear Colonel?

Have a drink and please explain."

"Thank you, Major. No more liquor.

Why she can't is mighty plain: ,
She ain't bred right!" "She ain't bred right?

Why, that's nonsense, Colonel Dale.

Baron Wilkes is Mabel's father

And her dam's by Olgee Wail."

"That's just it!" exclaimed the Colonel,

"That's just it! Those Wails ain't game.

But, good Lord, who looks for courage

In a horse with such a name!

Rightly Thomas W. Lawson

In the cause of trotters spoke,

When he offered breeders prizes

For horse names that weren't a joke."

"Colonel," said the Major sweetly,

"Little Mabel's grandly bred.

And your reason that she is not's

'Shallow' sir, as Touchstone said.

Next thing I expect to hear, sir,

Is that Baron Wilkes's a bull.

Colonel, you talk like a nigger

That is pretty nearly full."

"Major," said the Colonel, hotly,

"By George Wilkes I've always stood,
Claiming that no greater stallion's

Neighed at sunrise since the flood.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

When he died, and old Kentucky
Had a glory pass away
Then I boomed his son the Baron
As a king's horse, night and day."

"Well said, Colonel, quite poetic.
But, allow me to remark
That regarding Wails you are, sir,
Just a little in the dark.
They've a foolish name, I know, sir,
But they're handsome, fast and game.
Hence I stand by little Mabel,
Who will surely make a name."

Testily the Colonel answered:
"O, some time you cashed a check
On a Wail that won a contest
From some duffer by a neck.
And you got infatuated
With the crow-bait, ragman's horse
And a nag that carries Wail blood
Is a champion of course."

Bitterly the Major answered:
"O, one day you lost your roll
On a Wail, whose very owner
Told you should be hauling coal.
Though he warned you, you knew better.
You don't take dictation—no.
And a nag that carries Wail blood
Now's a quitter, fiend and slow."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Colonel Dale stood up and thundered:
 "Sir, who says I've ever bet
On a Wail horse is a liar,
 And I'll trim him, don't forget!"
Major Nyle sneered: "Trim him now, sir!"
 Instantly two shots were fired.
Major Nyle's left hand was shattered.
 Colonel Dale fell and expired.

Ellen ran from her piano;
 Down the stairs rushed "mother" pale.
On the porch they cried together:
 "Father! You shot Colonel Dale?"
"Yes, I did! He talked of Mabel
 Something awful; then denied
Having done a deed I'd witnessed,
 Which, of course meant that I lied."

"Come inside," said "mother" gently.
 To his room the women led.
"Go and call a doctor, Peter,"
 Ellen to a servant said.
"This is nothing, sweethearts, nothing.
 Glad my shooting hand is sound.'
He smiled grimly while the women
 Hand and wrist with linen bound.

"Deacon," said the Major briefly,
 "Tell the Dales." The negro left,
Thinking how to save their feelings
 With a sentence worded deft.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

At the Dales he said: "Excuse me.

Major Nyle said you should come—
You should come and get your father.

He is dead, ah, drunk, at home."

"Coon, you're crazy," said the Dale boys,

Steve and Thomas, picking fruit,

"Father ain't been drunk since war-time.

Say, coon, did your master shoot?

We'll go over." Steve cried: "Mother,

Major Nyle for us just sent.

We'll be back in, say, five minutes."

Feeling for their guns they went.

At the Nyles they found their father.

"Hey, there!" called the boys as one.

Major Nyle broke from the doctor;

In his clothes he put a gun.

"Boys," he said on the veranda,

"This is tough, but just look here—"

"Did you kill him?" asked the Dale boys.

If you did, your end is near."

"I'm the man!" replied the Major.

Then the Dales roared: "Women, hide!"

"Fix 'em, father!" said the women,

From behind a door inside.

Bullets rattled. Steve fell wounded.

Major Nyle dropped backward, dead.

Thomas had no mark upon him.

"Well, we got him, Steve," he said.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then he looked and saw his brother
Getting up in mortal pain,
To the Major rushed the women,
Calling: "Doctor! Help!" in vain.
"Listen, Nyles!" then Thomas bellowed:
"You for Steve have got to pay.
We won't harm your kids and women,
But we'll get your men someday.

"Coons, come help me take my father
To my mother," Thomas said.
All on the veranda heard him
But no person turned his head.
"Well, you needn't," Thomas muttered,
I, alone, can tote this load."
And with Steve, too game to murmur,
They went slowly down the road.

In a month Steve Dale was buried,
And a Nyle for that was paid.
Then a Nyle man laid for Thomas,
And two graves for these were made.
When not shooting they burned corn-fields,
Poisoned grass where cattle fed.
One day someone petted Mabel.
In an hour the mare was dead.

Soon, because of perfect shooting,
There was not a grown-up male
In the feud-cursed district living
By the name of Nyle or Dale.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then the women called relations
From far cities and they came.
Allan Dale came soon as summoned,
"Eager to get in the game."

Long he didn't roam the village
Seking targets christened Nyle.
Three next day arrived from Texas,
Bound to "do him up in style."
In two weeks he told his cronies:
"What their style was I don't know.
They shot quick, but I shot quicker.
They are planted in a row."

After this one-sided gun-play
Mrs. Nyle and Ellen found
That they had no match for Allan;
Their grown males were underground.
But the feud-fire was kept burning.
They called names and poisoned springs,
And the children fought in highways
With their fists and stones and slings.

One day Allan told his mother:
"Guess I'll take old Gilès, and go
Down the road a piece and grass him
For, perhaps, an hour or so."
"Yes, it's safe now," said his mother,
"Since you've cleaned up all those Nyles."
And, unarmed, and whistling softly,
He departed with old Giles.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Holding Giles and watching closely
What he ate, and how he ate,
Allan got, but didn't notice,
On the Nyles' unfenced estate.
Mrs. Nyle soon saw the poacher,
Took a field-glass used at tracks,
And exclaimed to Ellen, near her,
"There's a Dale! I know their backs."

Ellen looked, but wasn't certain.
"Yes it is!" said Mrs. Nyle.
"Wish he'd turn this way to prove it.
But I'd know a Dale a mile."
"Well, what of it?" then asked Ellen.
Mrs. Nyle said: "It's just this.
You have got to go and kill him!
That's 'what of it' my young miss.

Since this trouble I've grown nervous;
Far too nervous to shoot straight,
Or I'd go myself, this minute,
And that thief assassinate.
But your nerves are strong as ever.
You must go. This is my plan:
Dales, you know, won't shoot us women;
So you go dresed as a man.

Nancy, bring that suit you're mending."
And a workman's suit was brought.
Ellen watched the far-off poacher;
Saying nothing, deep in thought.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Put this on," exclaimed the mother.
"Here's some boots; put these on too.
Here's a big soft hat; your shot-gun.
Well, now, I believe you'll do."

"No," said Ellen, "Get those whiskers
That our boys use at their games.
You remember, Shepherd wears them
When he plays he's Jesse James."
Nancy found them after searching.
When adjusted Ellen said:
"Well, I'm going, and here's hoping
I won't have to stop his lead."

She ran briskly down the highway.
Allan never once turned round.
Then from tree to tree skulked Ellen,
Careful not to make a sound.
Soon she saw his features plainly,
And stood still behind a tree.
Then she roared: "Get under cover!"
And came forth so he could see.

Allan turning saw her aiming.
Thinking her a man, he fled.
Then behind a stump, face-downward,
Talking to himself, he said:
"Well, I was a doggone monkey
For to leave my cannon home.
Never thought a Nyle was likely
In these parts today to roam."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then he shouted, without looking:

“Hey, you fellow! Where you from?
Wish I’d known about your visit.

I’d have met you when you come.
I’ve been told there’s Nyles in Kansas,
And there’s some in Tennessee,
But no matter where you hail from
You have got the drop on me!”

Ellen’s pointed shot-gun wobbled,
And her sides with laughter shook.
But she tried to act determined,
Fearing that he’d risk a look.
What the end would be she knew not,
It was fun to keep him there.
Allan also seemed contented
For he never showed a hair.

Soon defiantly he shouted:

“Stranger, tell you what I’ll do.
Drop that gun and fight bare-knuckles
And I’ll cook your goose for you.
You’re as tall as me, you whiskered,
Broad-hipped, short nosed, pink galoot,
And I’ll come out there and whip you
If you’ll promise not to shoot.”

Ellen, aiming still her shot-gun,
To and fro with laughter rocked.
Then to make his torture greater
Loudly she the trigger cocked.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Allen heard this sign of battle
And lay silent for a while.
Then he said, aloud and puzzled:
"That's a most peculiar Nyle.

First he shouts, 'Get under cover!'
Then he stands there deaf and dumb.
I suppose that he is waiting
Till some reinforcements come.
Then no doubt his crowd will shoot me
From the side and from behind.
Well, when everything's considered,
Tell the truth, I don't much mind.

Ever since this trouble started
I knew what the end would be;
I'd go shooting Ellen's people
Till she'd have no use for me.
But if all her damned relations
Shot my people and me too
I'd say 'Ellen Nyle, I love you,'
With the last breath that I drew."

Ellen Nyle let fall her shot-gun,
Clapped her hands quick to her eyes;
Through her fingers burst big tear-drops,
And she gasped as one who dies.
To her knees she fell from weakness,
Tore off beard, threw hat from head,
And with hands outstretched, tear-blinded:
"Say, can't you catch on?" she said.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Allan looked, then ran and caught her.

Up he drew her to her feet,
By the hand and arm he held her
As she started for the street.

"So you love me, then," said Allan.

Up and down she shook her head
Four or five times quickly, looking
Toward her home to which she led.

"And you know I love you, don't you?"

Not a word could Ellen say.
There are tears that nearly kill one
And she shed those tears today.
Allan stopped, embraced her firmly,
Then he kissed her mouth and cheek.
Suddenly they heard behind them
Ellen's mother sternly speak:

"What you doing?" Ellen answered,
Drawing up to her full height:

"What we're going to do forever."

Allan said: "I guess that's right!"

Then he said: "This feud is over."

Mrs. Nyle sobbed: "Let it be."
And in silence, thinking deeply,
Arm in arm went home the three.

Rejoicing that the lover's were at last
United, to their camps the comp'ny passed.

THE THIRD NIGHT.

"How many here," said Hermes 'neath their tree,
"Know that beside the Union Depot we
Have something which is marv'lous, made of stone,
And over which Romance a charm has thrown,
Making a crude thing priceless?" None could guess
What this could be, so, with great loftiness,
This tragic tale of Cleveland's former days
He told, while on them shone the full moon's rays.

A CLEVELAND TRAGEDY.

My native city, Cleveland by the lake,
Her place among those famous towns must take
That draw the foreigner from far to see
Because of lovers and their tragedy.
Not only now, while flourishing in pride,
A granite vision by the water side,
Shall you be sought, but when each lofty wall
Shall level with Lake Erie ruined fall,
Yet pilgrims here shall journey, as men go
To Rimini and Sestos tumbled low.
For, of all carven stones that make this town
One shall endure and give you world-reknown.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

In Cleveland dwelt a youth who worked in stone,
Whose name to all our city is unknown.
Nor does our city's history record
The name of that sweet lady he adored
Who founded one more tragedy sublime
For poets to recite in royal rhyme.
As men these lovers' names shall never speak,
So too in vain shall sympathizers seek
The houses of their death and birth, nor may
A mourner on their tombs a lily lay,
Nor can tragedians upon the stage
Show their first meeting or their parting rage.
With ev'ry circumstance as it occurred,
For of these things our annals say no word.
But this is known: They parted on this shore,
The angry youth declaring that no more
Would he see Cleveland or his lady's face,
But live forever in some distant place.
But still he came next morning to the wall
On which he worked with chisel and with mall,
And though he of the quarrel nothing said,
The news thereof among his friends had spread.
And one determined then a trick to play,
And to the lady's house he ran straightway
And told her that the youth from her had gone,
Who, all unconscious of the trick, worked on.
Quick came the lady and her lover sought
Upon the wall, but seeing of him naught
She climbed a scaffold to its highest round
And dashed herself to death upon the ground.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

With others ran the lover to her side
And all in tears his friend began to chide
That he, through useless trickery, had proved
How faithfully the lady him had loved.

And now in days of sorrow, rage and blame,
To him that wondrous inspiration came
Through which among Love's luckless company
These two distinguished will forever be.
For, after she was buried, on a stone
That lay near where the girl herself had thrown,
The wond'ring workmen saw the lover trace
The outlines of his dear dead lady's face.
Death had a sculptor of a mason made,
And ev'ry day, instead of at his trade,
He at his art, with meditations sweet,
Now labored till her image was complete.
And then in place upon the half-built wall,
Above the spot where he had seen her fall,
He put this testament of love and woe
Which shall endure with stones by Angelo.

Now comes his tragedy; and wisely, Fate.
He'd loved and lost, and could, in art, create.
His soul was at its height. For such as he
Life's last experience is calamity.
And, as to Art, rebirth's far ultimate goal,
Was hurried upward this all-knowing soul,
So downward hurriedly, despoiled, he went
Till he reached madness in his dark descent.
Nor stayed he there. His swift, progressive Fate
That never kept him long in any state

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Let him but taste of madness, when she gave
Our city's young immortal to the grave.

Sev'ral remarked that they would go and see
This stone-face, their first opportunity.
For, as they said, we few quaint sights possess
Which cause a trav'ller from his path digress.
'Our lake," said Harold, "is sufficient fame,"
And he, remembering that his turn now came,
Chose for his subject Perry's victory,
And thus he told it patriotic'lly:

THE BATTLE OF LAKE ERIE.

Here Perry built a battle-fleet
From trees that once had spread
Their shady limbs, in summer's heat,
O'er Erie's hunters red;
From trees wherein Columbia's bird
Had roused the forest-fowl and herd
When dawn blazed down the lake;
From trees that had nursed Liberty
In root and branch, and then to sea
Their hearts had taken by the Free
To bleed for Freedom's sake.
For now all moored in Put-In-Bay
Our vessels rode, while northward lay
The English commodore, Barclay,
With six ships in his wake.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And Perry saw them from afar
 Upon the waters blue;
The kin of those whom spar to spar
 Paul Jones had riven through.
And then he cried: "For Liberty
We've often conquered on the sea,
 And there shall never fail.
But first are we to ever meet
Upon a lake an English fleet,
And our sea triumphs must repeat
 Upon Lake Erie. Sail!"

O, then arose a mighty cheer,
 Repeated as the wind
Drew out a banner whereon clear
 Our naval law was pinned;
The order: "Don't give up the ship!"
Which Lawrence spoke with dying lip,
 And which shall be obeyed
Until from ev'ry sea and lake
The armor-clads are called to make
 The war-god's peace-parade!

Our vessels sped before the breeze,
 The captain's "Lawrence" first,
And soon across the autumn seas
 A British gun-shot burst.
It missed, and at the fierce defi
Our sailors begged they might reply
 And vent their long-nursed hate.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

But Perry, our lake-god, for pride
Of fighting seamen side by side
That had the oceans terrified,
His men, till close, bade wait.

Then as the "Lawrence" charged the foe
Three ships on her loosed shell.
Down went her heroes row by row
All cheering as they fell!
Down went her heroes but, as rang
Their death-scream o'er the battle's clang
Their comrades to their places sprang
And answered ball for ball.
The crimson deck with dead was piled;
The lake with bleeding dead ran wild;
But still undaunted forward filed
The brave to lifeless fall.
Blown off were rudder, sail and mast,
The "Lawrence" rolled, all steering past,
When loud 'mid flame and smoke and blast
Men heard our captain call:
"The final gun, all hands, with me!
We leave, but yet shall victors be!
Down with a life-boat instantly!
Abandon vessel, all!"

Swift was he rowed through fire and flame
To where his consort fought.
Quick o'er her belching side he came
And his destroyers sought.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then, with a mien that did express
Sure triumph over brief distress,
The young whirlwind of righteousness
 Bore down with thunder's boom.
Between two British ships he placed
His vessel, and, all but embraced,
The cursing crews each other faced,
 The conflict to resume.
Again the death-shot pierced its mark;
Again spread smoking shell-lit dark,
While Perry's voice the gunners stark
 Heard roaring in the gloom:
"Four vessels have our comrades made
Surrender to their cannonade!
Now grapple till these two are laid
 In Britain's lake of doom!"

Walled in, we double fires received
 And double did return.
Ere long in death the King's ships heaved,
 Both riddled stem to stern.
But still against the wrath that surged
Between them valiant Barclay urged
His men, till, half their guns submerged,
 With conquering hopes no more,
The British struck their flag, which ne'er,
On all the seas they've dared and dare,
Till then they'd lowered to declare
 A squadron triumphed o'er.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then Perry to the "Lawrence" rowed,
And as her deck, revenged, he strode,
He cried above the Pow'r of Pow'rs:
"We've met the foe, and they are ours!"

Then Horace said: "I also will relate
A tale of deeds that make parts of this state
To me, at least, as grand, historic ground
As any spot in Europe to be found.
Indeed, if this in Europe had ta'en place
How to the scenes we all, like sheep, would race.
But all is in Ohio, all is near,
And hence of it the people never hear.
The story is Homeric ev'ry way;
And this, to you, my friends, I boldly say:
This story Homer's self has not surpassed;
And, being true, must Homer's lies outlast.
Be patient, hear it. Much I claim, I know,
But in the end that I am right I'll show."

BRADY.

In Pennsylvania, long before
The Indians left Lake Erie's shore
Two orphan boys were reared.
One Brady called, one Girty named,
In very childhood they were famed
As two who nothing feared.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

No beast walked underneath the moon,
Or roamed the forest dark at noon
 But they would track and slay.
No man fought fairly face to face,
Or from behind a hiding place,
But found these boys as brave as he,
Or deep in redskin trickery.
Nor did frontiersmen ever hold
Against thirst, hunger, heat or cold
 A stronger heart than they.

While still in youth upon their town
An Indian tribe, one night, came down,
 And from the redskin raid
These two alone escaped by flight,
But neither knew that from the fight
 Each safe retreat had made.
In one direction Brady went
And found a trading settlement.
They heard his speech, and felt his soul,
And gave themselves to his control.
An Indian village Girty sought
Against whose braves he'd never fought.
They heard his speech, and felt his soul,
And gave themselves to his control.

Revenge sought Brady for the night
When by his burning cabin's light
He ran through smoke-filled woods and heard
The screams of women massacred.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Revenge sought Girty for some slights
Upon him put when for the whites
He served as scout, and vowed that day,
Once in command, all whites to slay.
And thus upon Lake Erie's shores
These rival lords of out-of-doors

Lived long but never met.
Nor did they know that far apart
Within the wilderness's heart
Each lived and battled yet.

Once Brady on the warpath went
With twenty traders, and, near Kent,
Was ambushed by an Indian band
With which he battled hand to hand
Till nineteen of his men lay dead,
And from his side the last man fled.
The last man unknown refuge found,
But Brady, senseless, to the ground
Was struck by club and rifle-butt
And tied securely, hand and foot.
The Indians now were overjoyed,
Not that save two they had destroyed
A whole command, but that now low,
And yet alive, lay their chief foe.
For Brady now could tortured be
With fiendish Indian cruelty.
Then scalping Brady's murdered force
The happy Indians bent their course
Toward camp in far Sandusky, where
Their chiefs death-sentence should declare.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

With Brady on a litter borne
The Indians entered camp at morn,
All shouting madly as they came,
Upon a run, the captive's name.
From ev'ry side, excitedly,
The people swarming came to see
And compliment the victors, who
The cheering mob could scarce get through
To where the head-chief stood who gave
Rich gifts and praise to ev'ry brave.
On ponies messengers were sent
To ev'ry neighboring settlement
To call the chiefs and tribes that they
Might celebrate a holiday.

All chiefs arrived, in council they
Deliberated how to slay
With greatest suff'ring him who had
For years made many a wigwam sad.
In silence stood their enemy
With rawhide lashed against a tree,
While 'round him gathered buck and squaw
As though some curious beast they saw.
And often toward the council-tent
They shouted modes of punishment
To predjudice the council's mind
Lest that assemblage should be kind.

Soon came the chiefs in dignity,
Their eyes upon the captive white,
And in those eyes a fiendish light
Which Brady met unflinchingly.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The multitude in silence stood
And watched the chiefs approach, and when
In line before their fighting men
The head-chief's voice rang through the wood:
"Revenge upon him thus we take;
Go now and burn him at the stake!"

These words provoked so wild a cheer
The grazing ponies ran with fear.
The chiefs allotted tasks among
The boys and women of the throng.
Some went for wood, dry grass, the stake,
And flint with which a fire to make.
And Brady, with defiant air,
Watched them his funeral fire prepare,
Nor spoke a word while gloating tribes
Around him danced with taunts and gibes.

Now, when the stake was in the ground,
With grass and faggots piled around,
And Brady to it tied,
He, looking closely at the crowd
That for his death was crying loud,
Was suddenly amazed to see,
With other chiefs beneath a tree,
Chief Girty, plumed and dyed!

"O, Girty!" cried he, "don't you know
Brady, your friend of long ago?"
But Girty nothing said and gazed
At those who higher the faggots raised.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

In English Brady spoke, and he
Who held the torch instinctively
Stood motionless to see the end
Of one white's greeting to a friend.
The crowd their faces watched in turn
The meaning of his words to learn.
Girty was asked if Brady prayed,
Or coward plea for mercy made.
Still Girty nothing would reply,
Nor once on Brady turn his eye.
Then Brady tried his heart to reach,
Addressing him in Indian speech:

"Look! Girty, look! 'Tis Brady. He
Who lived with you from infancy
Until one night—but surely I
Need not myself identify
To Girty, Simon Girty? What?
You can't Sam Brady have forgot?
Forgotten Brady! Come! don't know
His voice? His name? No, no, not so!
But still you wait. For what? Must I
For you more evidence supply
That I am Brady? If so, well,
Hear how at once you me may tell.
Yes, though from out your memory
My name and voice have passed, still me
O, Girty, you may know if you
Will do what you've refused to do.
Yes, thus you may me recognize:
Come, look your brother in the eyes!

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

What? You refuse to do this? Why?
Speak! Have I wronged you? No reply!
O, never since the world began
Was man so scorned by fellow-man!
What do you fear, sir? That if you
For me should speak they'd kill you, too?
Suppose they should? Have I not braved
Ten dangers that you might be saved?
One I'll recall. One summer day
A giant bear we brought to bay.
We both attacked him, you were felled.
What followed? While the monster held
You screaming down my knife I drew
And cut its throat. Is this not true?
You said you would remember me.
What do you do to set me free?
Though sure to fail, a friend should try
To save a friend about to die.
And you for me should speak although
What I to these have done all know.
But one thing I have never done;
When I from them a battle won
The prisoners I did not burn,
And you such coward's act should spurn.
I die this hour, of course, but still,
Since you're a chief, you, if you will —"
"Apply the torch!" the head-chief cried.
The torch was instantly applied.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

As fire and smoke rose in a cloud
The chieftain's daughter from the crowd
At Brady ran with lifted knife
To cut the cords and save his life.
But Brady, as the others there,
Of her intention unaware,
Believed she came to mutilate
His features out of savage hate.
At this imagined deviltry
He doubled efforts to get free,
And lunging from a dagger stroke,
The weakened cords about him broke.
And then, still ignorant of her plan,
He threw her in the flames and ran.

This deed the Indians so appalled
That, though for help the maiden called
Repeatedly, they could not stir
To aid, or stop her injurer.

At length her constant screams of pain
Brought reason to her father's brain,
And dashing through the flames he drew
His daughter forth, and cried: "Pursue!"

The Indians studied close the ground,
And soon as Brady's trail they found
They raised a warcry merciless
And followed through the wilderness.
Two days and nights, with speed unslacked,
The Indians bleeding Brady tracked,
Who was, because of fire and flame,
Half blind, in rags, all scarred and lame.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Thus stumbling forth, near Kent again,
Where once he fell by these same men,
He heard a step, and suddenly
Burst plain in view the enemy.
With new-born strength, then, straight ahead,
Ran Brady for the river-bed.
"Don't shoot!" The Indian leader cried.
"We'll catch him at the river-side.
He cannot cross. He'll yield, and then
We'll burn him at the stake again."

And now begins a race of death.
With reeling gait and hard-drawn breath
Poor Brady runs. But how can he
Escape the howling enemy?
They ev'ry moment on him gain,
With ev'ry step his powers wane.
But still he staggers on; and why?
He must surrender, he must die.
Look! now he nearly falls. But still
He travels forth with iron will.
"I see," an Indian cries, "his scheme.
He means to drown there in the stream."
"'Tis true!" the leader cries, so near
That Brady's gasping he can hear.
"Make haste, or he'll outwit us yet!"
O, now to Brady's side they get!
They for him reach! But, with one leap,
He jumps across the river deep.

The Indians stopped and stood aghast,
While Brady through the forest passed.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Through all courageous men, not one
Would do what Brady had just done.
"Enough!" said the majority.
"Enough! That's all we want to see."
And, turning 'round, they homeward went,
In spite of comrades' argument,
Who sensibly had asked them: "How
Can half-dead Brady foil us now?
He cannot hide, his trail is clear;
He's weakening and no help is near."

These Indians stood awhile and gazed
Where he had leaped and Brady praised.
'Twixt rocky chasms roared the tide,
And more than twenty feet 'twas wide.
And this a wounded man had done
Who then a hundred miles had run!
This place, called "Brady's Leap," will be
A view-point through eternity.
Then searching long the Indians found
A place to cross. Again the ground
Was scanned by the determined few
And they took up the trail anew.

His steps they traced without a break
Which led them to a little lake.
And here 'twas lost upon the shore,
And, spite of search, was found no more,

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Though they the lake went 'round and 'round,
And all thought Brady swam and drowned.
Regretting this this they wearily
Sat down upon a fallen tree
That close beside the water lay,
And after talking, went away.
When they had gone, from out among
The limbs that in the water hung
Who wades but Brady! He had stood
Neck-deep the whole time in the flood.
He had displayed his strategy
By swimming forward to the tree
From his last foot-print in the ground,
Foreseeing they would think him drowned.
He waited by the little lake,
Which bears his name still for his sake,
Until the Indians far had gone,
Then lion-hearted journeyed on.
He found a town and there remained
Till he his fighting strength regained,
And then again to battle went,
And years upon the warpath spent.

Said Hermes: "Horace, you have kept your word.
A story more heroic I ne'er heard.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

What didn't Brady do? What hero e'er
So oft was tried and conquered ev'rywhere?
All praise is vain and useless. Little Kent
Immortal is." And home the comp'ny went.

THE FOURTH NIGHT.

While sitting 'neath their tree, to watch the skies,
The company, from reading, raised their eyes.
The sun blazed golden in a field of red,
Which, to the pale-blue zenith, fading, spread.
About the sun, untouched, though closely hedged,
Ranged many shining, purple clouds, gilt-edged.
An open space, bright red, stretched wide between
The clouds and water, dyed red, gold and green.
Avoiding clouds, the sun dropped here and spanned
A gold-path from horizon-line to land.
Diag'nally across the lake it lay.
Unsteady from the water's choppy play.
As the broad sun continued its descent
Its dazzling quality from out it went.
One could unblinded now its form behold,
Though golden still, it was unpolished gold.
Soon on the lake's sky-line sharp stood its rim,
The west turned one great shadow, luminous, dim.
Then jerkily it sank behind the deep,
And from all sides black night began to creep.
But soon the moon arose and made it day.
Then Hermes said: "The last night of our stay
Is here, and, Anna, will you please, once more
A gypsy tale relate? You have a store

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

I'm certain, and the company request
The same, I know." She said: "I'll do my best.
The tale is strange and long, but I will try.
"This happened in Missouri, years gone by."

HOKKANI BORO.*

Mrs. Azle, busy baking,
Heard a knock upon the door.
"Come," she said, with doughy fingers
Lifting baby from the floor.
Mrs. Hodder entered, asking,
As she sharply glanced around:
"Are you well today, sweet lady?"
Mrs. Azle made no sound.

Mrs. Azle now was thirty,
She was red-haired, freckled, fat,
Her blue eyes had one expression,
As if asking, "What is that?"
She'd a blue, white-dotted apron,
A red Mother Hubbard gown,
Underneath the arms was faded,
And in front hung too far down.

Mrs. Hodder was a gypsy.
She was fifty, tall and black.
She'd a face like Daniel Webster,
Wore a yellow skirt and sack.

*The Great Trick. (Romany.)

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Her large, boney, mannish body
 A long cloak of red concealed.
Sitting down, her dusty skirt-edge
 Feet in brass-toed boots revealed.

She sat watching Mrs. Azle
 With a smile she thought would please,
In the manner of an empress
 Putting some poor girl at ease.
She observed the speechless woman,
 Whom she'd frightened near to death,
Twitch her lips as though to answer,
 And release her long-held breath.

"Yes, I'm well," said Mrs. Azle,
 "Ain't it funny, but you know,
I'm just going to the grocer's;
 Should 'a' gone an hour ago."
"Twas the proper house to come to,"
 Mrs. Hodder thought and grinned.
"Ain't it funny! What's so funny?"
 She won't think so when she's skinned."

"Dovey, dovey, you're a liar!"
 Said the gypsy roguishly.
"I'm a gypsy fortune-teller,
 And I'll prove it, you shall see.
Stand right here and watch me closely.
 Now attend to what I say,
Didn't you make up that story
 Of the store, so I'd go 'way?"

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Tell me, are you not half silly,
Now, with fright, and don't know why?
That will do. Come quiet baby."

For the child began to cry.
Mrs. Hodder threw out evil
As a rose exhales a scent
And the baby saw it flying
Round the room on mischief bent.

"That old devil! Ain't it funny?"
Mrs. Azle thought and scowled.
Then she said: "Oh, Jake, kiss mama."
As the youngster scratched and howled.
Mrs. Azle thought to summon
Help, or use the rolling-pin.
Courage failed her. She felt "goose-flesh"
Come and go upon her skin.

"Now," said Mrs. Hodder, taking
Her black hood from off her head,
"It's a shame to see a lady
Of your breeding making bread.
Passing by I smelled the baking;
Then I saw your handsome face.
Says I, 'Such a lady working!'
'Why,' says I, 'it's a disgrace.

Where's her coach,' says I, 'and horses?
'Where's her servants, where's her gowns?
Why ain't this here lady seeing
Famous European towns?"

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then says I, 'Cause she ain't wealthy.
That's why she is slaving so.
Go inside and make her fortune.
Hands like hers ain't made for dough.'"

"O, my God!" shrieked Mrs. Azle,
"I have burned the pies! the pies!"
Kneeling down before the oven
Out she drew them, uttering cries.
"Silence!" ordered Mrs. Hodder.
"Put them on the bench; my dear.
Don't take on so. In this business
You won't be another year."

From beneath her cloak, the gypsy,
With a grave, mysterious air,
Took a box with sliding cover,
Made of pine, eight inches square.
Then she said: "Sit down and listen.
How much money are you worth?"
'O, a couple hundred dollars.
That is all we have on earth."

"In the bank?" "Yes, in the city."
Mrs. Hodder said: "That's right.
Now you go and get that money
In four fifties. Then tonight
Put it in this box I give you.
In the morning I'll come 'round,
Add a drug, then in your cellar
We will hide it in the ground.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

In three weeks, not one day sooner,
Get your box. What do you see?
Why, instead of your four fifties
Forty fifties there will be.
To a lady of your wisdom
I won't say, 'Remember, dunce,
Till three weeks have passed keep silence,
And your box don't look at once.'

Now, my dovey, I am psychic,
I can read a person's soul.
You are thinking: 'If this ragged,
Hungry gypsy, black as coal,
Has the magic to make fortunes
Why's she poor?' I'll tell you why.
I've no money, darling dovey,
For my art to multiply.

You are also wond'ring greatly
Why for nothing I should give
Such a secret that in splendor
All your life on earth you'll live.
But I haven't told the secret,
And for what I do you pay.
You must hand me twenty dollars
When I come three weeks today.

Now you're thinking: 'Twenty dollars!
Ain't it funny it's so cheap?'
So is seed, but not the harvest
When it's ripe enough to reap.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

But, indeed, were I no wizard
Many times that sum I'd charge.
But, your twenty, with my magic
To a million I'll enlarge.

Then you're wondering why I warn you
To keep silent. I will tell.
It's a law that two minds only
On an act like ours should dwell.
Not that I would change a woman
Who refused to do my will
Into——. Never mind, my dovey,
It is better to keep still.

Next, if you should tell your neighbors
I intend to make you rich,
They'd grow jealous. To prevent it
They would hang me as a witch.
Would you like to see me hanging
With my neck stretched out a yard,
And my ghost hear, ev'ry midnight,
In your attic, crying hard?"

Mrs. Azle, nursing baby,
Felt her flesh in sections crawl.
And the terror in her bosom
Must have turned her milk to gall.
For the baby left off nursing
With a curious, gulping cry,
As of one who's swallowed poison
By mistake, and fears he'll die.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Mrs. Azle walked the kitchen
With the fighting, screaming child.
"Hush that brat!" roared Mrs. Hodder.
"Stop it's mouth, or I'll go wild."
Then she rose and shouted: "Dovey,
I must go and so must you.
Banks, remember, close quite early,
And I see it's after two."

Then a smile benign and winning
Crossed that Daniel Webster face.
Which, however fine on statesmen,
On a woman's out of place.
After sending a commandment
From her witch-peaked eyes that meant:
"Get your money and keep silent!"
Mrs. Hodder homeward went.

Mrs. Azle dressed the baby,
And herself, and went to town.
"Draw your money? Going to leave us?"
Asked the bank-clerk with a frown.
"Yes," said Mrs. Azle, smiling.
Then inspired she said: "We go
'Cause my husband's got a offer
Out o' town; more pay, you know."

Mrs. Azle thought it "funny"
That she didn't feel the same,
Going home, as when to city.
Full of faith and bounce she came.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

'Twas the auras of strange people
Weakened Mrs. Hodder's spell,
As somnambulists are wakened
By a neighbor's blow, or yell.

Mrs. Azle now kept thinking,
As the street-car buzzed along,
That she'd done, or thought of doing,
Something very, very wrong.
"Ah! I have it," she mused, smiling.
"Told the bank we're going away.
That's a lie. I wish I'd told 'em
On a stove I want to pay."

Once again inside her kitchen
Mrs. Hodder's spell returned.
She went o'er the gypsy's speeches;
Not a flaw could be discerned.
One thing puzzled her a moment:
"How could magic so much do?
But," she said, "if I knew magic
I could make the money too."

Then her husband, Norbert Azle,
Home to supper, beaming, came.
At the table all was told him.
"What you think?" exclaimed his dame.
He leaned back, looked at the ceiling;
Then he teetered to and fro,
With his eyes upon the platter
Then he answered: "I don't know."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Say!" she cried, and struck the table,
"Tell you who can help us out.
Herman!" "Yes," said Norbert, teet'ring.
"He can do so without doubt."
On the floor he then rolled, saying:
"Give me Jake, I wanta play."
Jake was given; she left, saying
Just a moment she would stay.

Now this Herman was a genius
In at least three different ways.
First, as sage among a people
With whom worldly wisdom pays.
Then he shone as an inventor,
(Was in chemistry self-taught),
And as merchant so did business
That his store a fortune brought.

He had auburn hair and mustache,
And a gray and thoughtful eye.
He was heavy, strong and solid,
Quick in movement, six feet high.
He was genial, candid, cunning,
And his personal charm was great.
But he punched like James J. Jeffries
And some people bore him hate.

When Bavarians were in trouble
To his kitchen large they came.
There they told amazing stories
Of their danger and their shame.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then, "I'll see the judge about it."

Or, "I'll see he marries you."

And the wretched went home knowing

What he said he'd do, he'd do.

•

Yet this Beowulf, this Moses,

Had a check upon his soul.

Said the Lord: "Thy people only,

Far from home, shalt thou control.

In the ages that are over

All the nations of thee heard.

But 'tis time to clip thy talents.

Thou shalt read no English word."

So he read and wrote in German,

But of neither very much.

All good books, he thought, were English,

And no German book would touch.

But he spoke the English language

In a strange and forceful way,

And his landsmen made do likewise,

Soon as ten words they could say.

Mrs. Azle found him rocking

In a rod-braced easy-chair.

That is, rods from seat to rockers

Ran to help his great weight bear.

Near him studied sev'ral children,

Next him sat the wife he loved.

With a bare foot, to his caller,

Then a rocking chair he shoved.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Mrs. Azle said: "Now, Herman,
We don't trade here, you know that,
Since, because he beat his woman,
You my cousin knocked down flat.
But us Bayers, we're so funny; •
Some of us just wish you'd die.
But as soon as we're in trouble
Here we come, I don't know why."

Then she rose and crossed the kitchen
That adjoined the groc'ry store.
Took a glance at people buying,
Turned away and closed the door.
"I don't want no people list'ning."
Then, "O, why did Mrs. Kahnt
Come here yesterday?" said Herman:
"Mrs. Azle, what you want?"

Then she told what Mrs. Hodder
Would for twenty dollars do.
Herman, rocking, watched her closely,
And kept still till she got through.
Then he said: "Why, Mrs. Azle,
Can't you see this couldn't be?
You are talking like those greenhorns
'Way out back in Germany.

I'm ashamed a countrywoman
In this country's such a fool.
Why, them little kids know better
That ain't been two years in school.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Ain't you learned, since you came over,
From the Yankees that you meet,
That this thing of growing money
In the cellar is a cheat?"

"O, the Yankees! They're such wonders,"
Mrs. Azle said and sneered.

"This here woman's sure a wizzard,
'Cause when in my eyes she peered,
I felt creepy, and so funny.

I can't tell you what it's like.
Let us say—suppose the devil
With a snake your face should strike."

"God in Heaven!" muttered Herman,
Sadly looking at the floor.

Then, while pulling at his mustache,
Softly, thoughtfully, he swore.

Mrs. Azle said: "This gypsy
Is a honest woman, too.

Why, she doesn't want a penny
Till she proves what she can do.

It's because you didn't see her.

If you'd seen her you would get
All your twenty thousand dollars
So she'd witch it too, you bet.

She is certainly a wonder.

Let me tell you what she done.
I had thoughts while she was talking
And she read 'em ev'ry one.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

First she read my thoughts as truly
As I'd wrote 'em on that wall.
Then she cleared up what seemed doubtful.
That's what I a wizard call.
Surely, you, now going on fifty,
Know it's harder, far, to see
What a person is a-thinking,
Than make gold by witchery."

"Where's that box?" said Herman, curtly.

"Home," said Mrs. Azle. "Why?"

"Get it Alfred—and the money."

Herman said with downcast eye.

"Tell her husband that I want it."

Off ran Alfred. Herman then,
From another child at school-work,
Took some paper, ink and pen.

"Get what's written, Charles," he ordered.

"Will they sell it after dark?"

Said the youth who read the message.

"Go!" was Herman's sole remark.

Back came Alfred, box and money.

Herman put them in the safe.

Then sat down and watched the woman,
Who began to scowl and chafe.

"Say," she whined, "you're known as tricky,
And you're mad at us we know.

But to rob, bare-faced, a woman—
Well, I call that pretty low."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Yes, I'm tricky," answered Herman.

"Tricks on tricksters I can turn,
As a certain smooth-tongued robber
In a little while will learn.

Mrs. Azle, let me tell you
All about this gypsy game.
There is lots of ways to work it
But the principle's the same:
In this box you put your money.
To the cellar then you go.
On this box the gypsy woman
Will some salt, or sugar, throw.

'Dig a hole,' she then will tell you.
You put down your box and dig.
Suddenly she says: 'My goodness!
But the rats down here are big.'
'Where?' says you, and, like a ninny,
Look, and turn and move around.
Up she takes your box with money;
Puts one like it on the ground.

Then, you awful easy woman,
She will say: 'Now hide it well,
And for three weeks don't come near it,
And of course no person tell.'
Time goes on, three weeks are over.
How's your money getting on?
You go look—find stones or paper.
Out of town the gypsy's gone."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"O, go on!" said Mrs. Azle,
That's too daring, that won't pass.
Only fools would be so risky,
And this gypsy ain't a ass.
Then, O lands and ocean, Herman,
Think of me, so dumb I'd hide
In the earth a box with nothing
But some worthless stuff inside!"

"Don't come in!" cried Herman, rising,
As his son approached the door,
Holding up a tin and saying:
"Got it at the seventh store."
Then said Herman: "Mrs. Azle,
Stay right here. I'll soon be in.
To his workshop he went smiling,
Taking with him box and tin.

"Go to bed now, all you children,"
Said the mother of the flock.
"Charles, go too. First close the groc'ry.
Don't you see its nine o'clock?"
"What you s'pose," asked Mrs. Azle,
"Herman's going to do out there?"
"I don't know," exclaimed the mother,
"And, what's more, I do not care."

Then she left the woman sitting
In the kitchen all alone.
She of tragic scenes and stories
Long ago had weary grown,

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

As in theatres, musicians
After seeing once the play,
Soon as they have played their pieces
From the acting steal away.

Mrs. Azle rocked and wondered:
"What's he up to anyhow?
Bet a dollar Jake and Norbert
On the floor are sleeping now.
I suppose I'll get in trouble.
If I do, it serves me right.
What the nation did I tell for?
Wished I'd kept my big mouth tight."

From his little shop came Herman
Empty-handed and sat down.
Half in pity, half in anger,
Watching her, he thought: "The clown."
Then he said: "Where is the missus?"
"Gone to bed," she said, and then:
"How about my money, Herman,
Don't I get it back again?"

He replied: "Now, Mrs. Azle,
Did you ever hear I steal?"
"No," she said, but can you blame me
That uneasy I should feel?
In your safe you've got our money,
And we ain't the best of friends
Wished I had it back! To earn it
We've worked off our finger ends."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then he said: "That's just the reason
That your money I will keep.
I am acting like a shepherd
That protects the foolish sheep.
Come around tomorrow evening
And you'll get your money back.
I've another kind of money
For that gypsy villain black."

"Where's the box?" asked Mrs. Azle.
"On the porch there," he replied.
"Don't you open it, remember!"
"Why?" she asked him, "What's inside?"
"Nothing!" then he shook his finger.
"Don't look in, for, if you do
I will come and strip you naked
And will beat you black and blue!"

"Now," said she, her thin lips trembling,
"You ain't going to play no tricks
On this gypsy woman, are you?
Don't you get me in no fix!
Come now, come now, don't get even
On a woman, poor, like me.
We don't trade here, but I promise——"
"You clean miss the point," said he.

As I've said, he read no English,
But at printing he would look.
As a school-boy in a laundry
Will go through a Chinese book.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Now this day a cracker agent
Left a poster gay. It hung
On the wall, and, round a portrait,
Verse the cracker's merits sung.

"Pretty woman," said he, pointing
At the protrait of the dame.
"Agent tells me she's a countess.
My wife beats her just the same."
"Yes, said Mrs. Azle, slowly.
"Wished I had that hair o' her'n."
Then she said: "About the gypsy—
Don't do her a wicked turn."

Then upon the print fell Herman,
Wond'ring what on earth it meant,
'Round the body of the countess
Words were twisted, stretched and bent.
'Say," said Mrs. Azle, coyly,
"Tell me what is in that box.
Have you got it stuffed with paper,
As you said they do, or rocks?"

Herman, rocking, scanned the printing.
Mrs. Azle said: "You know,
Hard with me, not with the gypsy,
Will your monkey-business go.
Come now, make the box all empty
And don't give me, listen, lend
Me a couple hundred dollars
And I'll always be your friend."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Herman, rocking, scanned the printing.

“Don’t you worry we won’t pay.

I will pay and do this extra:

I will scrub your store each day.

Yes and I will do your washing,

And your clothes I’ll sew and mend

If that box you will make empty,

And a couple hundred lend.”

Herman, rocking, scanned the printing.

Then she thought: “It’s plain to see.

I suppose them fallen women

Once was in distress like me.

“Come,” she said: “That gypsy woman

Do not force me to deceive.

Clean the box and get my money.”

She began to talk like Eve.

Herman, rocking, scanned the printing.

Then she broke completely down,

On the table she fell forward,

Tears ran on the oil-cloth brown.

With her handkerchief before her,

Then she rose and sought a door.

When she found one, ’twas the wrong one,

For it led into the store.

“My! My! My!” she said while walking,

“Jesus, dear, you woman’s friend,

Please do something, something, something,

So my agony will end.”

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

She heard Herman calmly rocking,
While about the store she paced.
Suddenly she left off crying
And to him her steps retraced.

Then she said with sobs, but smiling:
"Here's the whole plain truth: I lied!
Yes, I lied here like a good-one,
All because of silly pride.
We all envy you your riches;
So my husband said: "You go
With this story of the gypsy,
And won't he be jealous though.'"

"Well," said Herman, "I am sorry
I can't read what's printed there.
If I only could read English
I would be a millionaire.
Then I've got a better reason.
Once I seen a Roman play,
By an English feller written,
Dead and gone and passed away.

I'd another feller with me,
And he said: 'That's only one.
There is over thirty others,
Full of beauty, wisdom, fun.'
Now, to buy that English acting,
And, when we close up at nine,
Just sit down and read till midnight.
Don't you think that would be fine?

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Take your box; it's on the porch, there.
Keep from light and don't look in.
If you do, I'll come and strip you
And in ribbons whip your skin.
No! You cannot have your money!
Don't you look like that and gulp.
If your husband makes it open
I will beat him to a pulp."

Home she went, and in the coal-shed,
In the dark, concealed the box.
Then she woke her sleeping husband
After many thund'rous knocks.
"Holy smoke!" he said, "what kept you?
You been bawling, hey? What for?"
"Is our Jake undressed?" she asked him,
As she locked the kitchen door.

Jake was sleeping in his high-chair.
Norbert she began to scold.
While undressing Jake she muttered
Things about his taking cold.
In the bedroom came the husband.
"Say," he said, "what made you cry?
Did you hear of some relation
That is sick and going to die?"

Jake she covered in his cradle,
Then undressed and jumped in bed.
Soon as in she pulled the blankets,
Like a scared child, o'er her head.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then she started crying wildly,
Thinking Norbert could not hear.
To her feet he threw the blankets.
Asking: "Say, what ails you, dear?"

On the bed he sat beside her.
Then he said: "O, well, I s'pose
That big bull-head something wicked
That you done when single knows.
He knows ev'rything, the sneaker,
And he's got too big a lip.
And because we do not trade there
He'll tell people of your slip.

Ain't I told you it don't matter
What you done when you was young?"
"But I didn't!" said she truly,
And her hands with anguish wrung.
"If you did, though", he insisted,
"You are just as dear to me.
And whoever was the pig-head
Him, I know, it could not be."

"O," she moaned, "he's got our money."
"He won't keep it, don't you fret,"
Norbert said. "He ain't no robber."
Then she said: "That ain't all yet.
Why, he says this gypsy woman
Is a fake. My box he took
In his shop he went and fixed it,
And inside we dassn't look.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Now that gypsy said she'd curse us
If we didn't do it right.
And if she finds out we fooled her
She will haunt us every night.
Look at Schweitzers, in the village
Where we come from, how they died,
Just because they mocked a gypsy.
But to cheat one yet beside!

If I only had the money,
I would leave the box alone.
And I'd give the witch the money,
If we never this place own.
We can earn it back, we're healthy;
You are getting two a day.
But to cheat her, and to hurt her!
Where's our brains, I wanta say?"

"See!" said Norbert, "that big mule's head,
That thick, hairy-chested ape,
He has got us in a pickle.
Our affairs are in nice shape."
"Yes," she answered, "my dear Norbert,
We are in a trap all right.
But don't worry, my dear husband,
I will get us out tonight.

I can't face that gypsy lying;
I ain't cut out to be slick.
And upon that poor old woman
I won't help him play no trick.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

But I got to! He's so worked it
That, no matter how it goes,
She'll get swindled, we'll get punished,
In a way no person knows."

"Stop, you fool! you fool!" cried Norbert.

To the floor he bore her down,
In the struggle for the pistol.

Into shreds he tore her gown.
Then he led her from the bedroom
By a handful of her hair,
As a farmer out to pasture
By the forelock, leads a mare.

Then he rushed back to the bedroom,
Put the pistol in his coat.

Then he raced her to the kitchen
Where she meant to cut her throat.
Back he forced her to a sofa.

She kept crying, "Let me die!
It is better we all do so
Than to gypsies tell a lie."

As a steer develops cunning
For the first time in his life
When he smells the butcher coming
With a hammer and a knife,
So across the brain of Norbert,
In his life's first great distress,
Came a scheme of consolation,
So he said with tenderness:

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Come, my dear, my own dear baby.

Jake, he only is a kid.

You're the one that needs the petting;

All is right that you have did.

I can't stand to see you beller,

So to Herman's house I'll go,
And I'll ask him what's the insides

Of that box and let you know."

Here she reached in Norbert's pocket

For his handkerchief, and said:

"He won't yield. He's like a statue

Of old Bismarck that is dead."

"O," he said, "I'll talk so nicely,

And I'll tell him how you cry,
And I'll promise not to tell you,

And will swear to you I'll lie.

First I'll say: "Now tell me, truly,

What does that there box contain?

I, of course, won't tell my woman.

Just to *me* the trick explain.

When he's through, I'll say, 'Now, help me

Make for her a soothing lie,

So she'll keep her gypsy bargain.

If she can't do that she'll die.'

Home I'll come and tell exactly:

First just what the box does hold.

Next I'll tell you what our bluff is

That to soothe you must be told.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Have you got me understood?
I want truth for me not you.
And I want a lie to fool you
So the business you will do."

"Let me up, our Jake is crying."
"Well," she said and brought out Jake,
"He might yield, but he's more likely
With one blow your neck to break.
Go and see him. If its harmless,
What he done, all well and good.
In a week I'll find the gypsy
Claiming I misunderstood.

I'll go out where she is camping
And our money with me take,
For he gives it back tomorrow,
And to her this speech I'll make:
'Here, I've brought our couple hundred,
When you left I found it all;
Make it grow *here* with your magic;
In three weeks on *you* I'll call.'"

"Very well," said Norbert, leaving.
'Round the block he walked and walked.
On the streets that were deserted
To himself he loudly talked.
He cursed Herman's interference;
What to him was this affair?
What they did with their own money
Why should he a moment care?

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Once he thought: "Perhaps that gypsy
Is a fraud. But what to do?
Having started with this business
We have got to see it through.
For a lie to fool my woman
I would give ten years of life.
O, I got it! Yes, I got it!"
Home he started to his wife.

"I have seen him!" said he smiling.
"He's a foxy. He's all right.
It's the first time that I ever
Of him closely got a sight.
I don't wonder he's our ruler;
It's too bad he ain't a king.
I went right into his bedroom,
Just as bold as anything.

'My dear Norbert,' says he whisp'ring,
'There is feathers in that box.
But, old boy, don't tell your woman
Or you'll get some awful knocks.'
Then I busted out a-laughing,
And his great big wife awoke.
Then he said, like this: 'Don't frighten.'
And he gave her head a stroke.

'Tell your woman,' said he, winking,
'That the money's in all right.
Then sneak out and get your money
From my safe tomorrow night.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Tell your wife I got disgusted
In the shop, and from my vest,
In the box I stuffed four fifties.
So, goodnight. I want to rest.'

There," said Norbert, "in a nutshell
Is the whole thing, plain and clear.
Feathers cannot hurt the gypsy,
So to harm you need not fear.
You was 'fraid you'd cheat the gypsy;
Well, look here. When Herman gives
Me our money, you go take it
To the gypsy where she lives.

I half think she is a swindler,
But we've got to go ahead."
"Yes, we have!" said Mrs. Azle,
"Or some day you'll find me dead.
I believed some dang'rous mixture
In that box of hers he had
But, of course, if it's just feathers,
Why, our cheating ain't so bad."

They retired, and Norbert Azle
Went contentedly to sleep.
Herman's game he couldn't fathom
But he hoped them safe he'd keep.
Mrs. Azle cried a little.
She had disobeyed, and yet
Feathers wouldn't hurt the gypsy
And their money she'd soon get.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

In the morning she said: "Norbert,
In the night I had a dream;
To my side there came a angel
And he said: 'I'll help your scheme.
Take a sheet of clean, white paper,
Sharp a pencil and then write:
"These are feathers, but our money
You will get tomorrow night."

'Then go put it,' said the angel,
'In the box and close it tight,
And you won't need never worry
That it won't come out all right.'
And he looked so young and holy,
And he smiled so pure and sweet,
That I'll dress me now and do it,
Then I glad can breakfast eat."

"Just lay still," said Grosser, putting
His big arm around her waist.
"Just lay still and hear some reason.
You are in too much the haste.
Didn't Herman tell you never
In that box to look, and why?
(Course a woman couldn't see it).
Feathers out of it would fly!

Then he'd come and see them laying
In the yard and on the street,
And (of course while I was working)
Black and blue your body beat."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And since Herman could whip Norbert
With one hand behind his back,
He, too, feared that box to open
Lest some parts of him turn black.

Once again the steer in danger
Of his life, developed wit.
"Say," he said, "that angel's crazy!
Gee, I'm glad I thought of it.
That there gypsy can't read German;
Only German we can write.
Do you see it? We'd be foolish.
No, that dream's knocked out of sight."

After breakfast Norbert left her,
Saying: "Go ahead I say.
And what happens then let happen;
We ain't dead yet, anyway."
From the coal-shed Mrs. Azle
Got the box, and in a chair
Sat and held it, wond'ring sadly
How the day's events would fare.

Soon she heard a person coming
Through the house, with footsteps slow.
"Ah, good-day," said Mrs. Hodder.
Mrs. Azle jumped up with, "O!"
"Are you ready?" asked the gypsy,
"If you are then come with me.
Lock your doors. Have you a shovel?
By the stove is one, I see."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

To the cellar went the women.
Mrs. Hodder said: "My dear,
I can feel that you are nervous;
You believe this whole thing queer.
Deed, by deed, I'll prove I'm honest.
Speech, by speech, I'll prove I'm true.
In the first place, here's the shovel;
Let the hole be dug by you."

There were windows in the cellar,
And, while Mrs. Azle dug,
Mrs. Hodder, squatting, pointing,
Gave the woman's skirt a tug.
Then she said: "Who is that standing
In the yard? See, there's a man."
Then a peddler knocked and shouted:
"Nicey orange? nice banan?"

"Not today," said Mrs. Azle,
Shifting glances as she spoke.
Mrs. Hodder changed the boxes,
Then went feeling in her cloak.
"That will do," exclaimed the gypsy,
"You have dug it deep enough.
Put your box in; I won't touch it.
Now I'll sprinkle on this stuff.

"Now my dovey," said the gypsy,
Throwing salt upon the lid,
"Fill the hole, and with the shovel
Beat the dirt so it is hid.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

That is splendid. Why, you couldn't
Tell we'd dug a hole at all.
Now I'll ask a little blessing;
For good luck, to you, I'll call:

Pass by this house, ye fiends of hell!
O, come not here and drag her forth,
And cut her up, and by a spell
The fragments send east, west, south, north.
Take not her baby by the feet
And dash its head against a tree,
And drop it, where they people eat,
Beside the far-off Zulu sea.
From this refrain, your anger hold,
Until you're *sure* that she has told."

Mrs. Azle shook with horror,
And stood whining like a beast.
Mrs. Hodder watched her sternly
That her spell might be increased.
She had brains — this Mrs. Hodder,
And she had witch-pointed eyes,
And before this combination
Gentle reason sometimes flies.

Mrs. Hodder thought her victim
Would go crazy, and, while mad,
Try to kill her with the shovel
As another woman had.
So she left off concentrating,
And relaxed her eye-control,
Slowly, slowly, that the woman
Slowly would regain her soul.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Well," said Mrs. Hodder, sweetly,
With the corners of her eyes
Resting calmly, but still showing;
Their great sign Roms can't disguise.
"Shall we go now? All is over."
"I don't care. Suppose we do?"
Mrs. Azle said, hysterics
Coming, as the gypsy knew.

When up stairs, said Mrs. Hodder:
"Come, let's have a little talk.
I can feel a disposition
On your part to doubt and balk.
Trust me, dovey, for suspicion
All my magic may destroy.
Trust me! When three weeks are over
I will make you dance with joy.

I believe in answering questions.
I am honest, fair and square.
Why then, till three weeks are over,
Must you not look in down there?
I will ask you just one question;
When you answer you will know.
Just one question, my dear lady,
Will that I am honest show.

Will a plant continue growing
If you pull it up each day,
And its tender roots examine?
Answer me, what do you say?"

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"No, it won't." "Well then my dovey,
Neither will your fortune grow
If, to see if I am lying,
You down there to meddle go.

Don't I, when three weeks are over,
Come right here to you again?
And, if I have tried to swindle,
Can't you have me murdered then?
You're ashamed! you look it! know it!
To have doubted so my word.
Well, good-by. In three weeks, dovey,
We will see what has occurred."

Mrs. Hodder left the woman
Sitting thinking in her chair.
Did the gypsy change those boxes?
She was stricken with despair.
If she did and found those feathers,
Mrs. Hodder then would see
That she'd played a trick upon her,
And, of course, enraged would be.

And she couldn't make it even,
For that Herman had her gold.
And the fact that he possessed it
Proved that someone she had told.
And the gypsy woman warned her
Not to tell a soul on earth.
Mrs. Azle wished she'd perished
On the morning of her birth!

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

If she hadn't changed those boxes
Then she'd hidden feathers. Well,
This old gypsy was so clever,
Could she somehow this cheat tell?
Say that Mrs. Hodder sitting
In her tent would this detect,
(Though she didn't in the cellar)
What would then be the effect?

Ah! but Herman, that same evening
Gave their money. Here's the case:
She'd go down, remove the feathers,
And those bills put in their place.
Herman said: "That box don't open!"
Herman? Pooh! But stay, but stay!
Mrs. Hodder also warned her:
"From the money keep away."

If she touched it, when the gypsy
Came around again she'd see
That the "magic" had been scattered,
And no fortune there would be.
"So you've tampered, have you, dovey?"
Mrs. Hodder would remark,
And perhaps change Mrs. Azle
To a dog and make her bark!

"Soon as I can get my money
To her camping place I'll run,
And I'll say: 'Here is our money.
I to you a wrong have done.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

If you took our box home with you,
You got feathers. I ain't smart.
They got in, and not the money.
Here it is. Now use your art.'

If she says 'Why dovey, dovey,
What in thunder do you mean?
Feathers? Feathers? I no feathers
Nor that box of yours have seen.'
Then I'll say: 'It's mighty funny!
I found money on the floor,
And I'm sure the box holds feathers;
We must magic it once more.'

If she's honest, or a swindler,
That is neither here nor there.
This is all: She has been cheated,
And how will she cheating bear?
If she simply wants our money,
And I put it in her hand,
Seems to me that she'll forgive me
And good friends again we'll stand."

Then about her household duties
Mrs. Azle worried went.
"O," she cried, "I'm like a sinner
Just to Purgatory sent.
But I must keep cool, or, maybe,
I'll go mad and kill our Jake.
Wait! tonight I get the money
And the whole thing right will make."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Now as soon as Mrs. Hodder
Reached a lonely country road,
To a vacant house, called haunted,
And fast tumbling down, she strode.
In his soul the master, Herman,
Knew this thing the witch would do
To extract the fancied plunder,
So he hid in this house, too.

Then she drew the sliding cover —
Came a flash, a cloud of smoke;
On the floor the witch rolled, blinded;
Cries of terror from her broke.
Forth came Herman, slowly, smiling,
Mrs. Hodder heard him stalk.
She stopped howling, rose and fumbled
Where she thought she heard him walk.

He kept dodging her adroitly
'Round the rotten, creaking floor.
Mrs. Hodder, still in silence,
Felt the wall to find a door.
Mrs. Hodder did some thinking;
She had heard that ghosts lived here.
With her eyes alright, the devil,
As she said she would not fear.

But her eyes were gone forever,
And she thought ghosts had her caught.
For, that man would have the courage
There to stay she never thought.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

So she said: "My lords and masters,
I have served you long and well,
Will you please forgive this error
Into which today I fell?

I believed the woman simple,
But she took some man's advice.
It's the first time I have failed you,
And it will not happen twice."
"How is business?" then said Herman.
"Pretty slack, I 'spose, these days?
Watch me, dovey, tell me truly;
Is there any business pays?

Now I ain't no politician,
And I don't know very much,
But you have to get up early
When you beat my type of Dutch.
I said: 'People, vote for Grover,
And the times will be so hard
That, instead of eating butter
On your bread, you won't have lard.' "

Mrs. Hodder, by a chimney,
Braced herself and stood there dumb.
To surprise, chargin, and suffer'ing
Herman thought she would succumb.
Never had she heard a mortal
Speak that way and in that tone.
She was in a master's presence;
By their speeches are they known.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

She put two and two together.

He who had the nerve and brains
To compose and speak those phrases

Was the author of her pains.

But she'd ask of him a favor,

Then revenge on him she'd get.

So, her waning strength she rallied,

And her body ready set.

"Will the gentile, in his mercy,

Lead a gypsy down the lane?

I've been punished, and I'm dying.

Help me find my tents again."

"I would do it," answered Herman,

"But I got a jealous wife.

If I walk with other women

She will scold me all my life."

Herman, calmly, watched her closely.

Then she made a sudden spring.

What she meant to do was chew him,

Like some wounded jungle thing.

Herman dodged, and through a window,

Like a catapult she shot.

With terrific screams, threats, curses,

To her feet the gypsy got.

Far-off neighbors heard the swearing,

And the screaming, and came out.

"By the haunted house! the devil!"

She could hear the farmers shout.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

In they ran and locked their dwellings,
Some for children went that strayed.
It's a fact that two whole families
'Round a cross, in terror, prayed.

Mrs. Hodder stood bewildered
For a moment, and then found,
Through sheer luck, the right direction
To her distant camping ground.
Off she started, running briskly
In the middle of the street;
Herman watched a while, then followed,
Just as softly and as fleet.

Soon she cut across a meadow,
Where, packed up, the gypsies stood.
Herman stopped upon the roadside
Where his view of all was good.
"Help me! Help me!" then she shouted.
Then she moaned: "It failed — the trick!"
Then she fell. Up came two women.
When they saw her they grew sick.

To assist them men came running;
In a wagon she was laid.
Off they drove her, braced with blankets,
And a woman giving aid.
"Forward, pals!" the Chieftain ordered,
Lashing horses into foam.
Down the line: "She's dead!" was shouted.
Herman heard it and went home.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

In the evening, Mrs. Azle,
To her husband said: "Don't eat,
Till you go and get our money.
I will wait here on the street."
Herman gave the money, laughing.
Through a window he could see
Mrs. Azle coming slowly,
Looking forward anxiously.

"Norbert," said he, "Give this money
To your wife, and then come here."
Mrs. Azle took the money
And departed like a deer.
"What you want?" said Norbert, smiling.
Herman said: "Now, do you know
What your wife intends of doing?
To the gypsy-camp she'll go.

Where's the gypsies? Out of city.
Where is Mrs. Hodder? Dead!
And who killed her? I'm the feller."
"No!" astounded Norbert said.
"Now," said Herman, "if your woman
Knows that Mrs. Hodder died,
She, because she helped to kill her,
You can't tell, might suicide.

What to do? Well when your woman,
Disappointed, comes tonight,
You just ask: 'Well, how's the gypsies?'
She will say: 'They've taken flight.'

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then you say: 'They left the city
'Cause they thought that you was 'on.'
Mrs. Hodder found some shavings
In that box — that's why they're gone."

"I said feathers, Herman, feathers."
"You said 'feathers?' What the deuce?"
Norbert told the whole long story.
"Shake!" said Herman, "you're no goose!
Keep it up! Yes, tell your woman
That together us two joked
'Bout them feathers, and imagined
How the gypsy'd be provoked.

Don't you guy her — she's too nervous.
Ask her gently: 'Don't you see
That the gypsy was a swindler?'
She persuaded soon will be.
Now go home, and in the morning
I will come and do the rest."
Home went Norbert. Soon his lady
Entered, looking wan, distressed.

"Why," said Mrs. Azle, puzzled,
"What you think? They're gone away!
They left town, I heard, like crazy.
Very strange, if I must say."
"No," said Norbert, smiling kindly,
"She got feathers, and they thought
You had tricked her, so left city
Quick, ascares they'd all be caught.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Herman's coming in the morning,"
Norbert said, "to do the rest."
"What is that?" said Mrs. Azle.
"Give that cellar box a test?"
"I suppose so," answered Norbert.
"Don't you think he's pretty sly?"
But he saw his wife was sleeping,
So put up with no reply.

Herman found them at their breakfast.
"Now," he said, "before you go
To the fact'ry, that this gypsy
Was a faker I will show.
Come along. Where is your cellar?"
Norbert pointed, saying: "There."
Both men started. Mrs. Azle
Seemed afraid to leave her chair.

She had vivid recollections
Of experience in that place.
"Come," said Norbert, and he took her,
As a child, in his embrace.
In the cellar Norbert held her
On his lap, while Herman worked.
Soon he held the box before her,
And the lid from off it jerked.
"What is that?" he said with triumph.
"What is that?" Now, there you are!"
There, like bills, were rolled some clippings
From the Kansas City "Star."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

"Well," said Norbert, in the kitchen,
"We your work appreciate.
Thank you! thank you! I must leave you.
There's the whistle. I'll be late."

"Mrs. Azle," then said Herman,
Soon as Norbert bade "Good-bye,"
"Often women, in my kitchen,
Talk, then grow ashamed and cry.
And if ever I should use it
As a club above their head,
Or repeat it to a mortal —
Hope the Lord will strike me dead!"

"What's the charges?" "Mrs. Azle,
Would I charge to help the poor?"
Then he left, the woman watching,
As she held ajar the door.
"Well," she thought, "there's no use talking,
There ain't any more such men.
We will trade there, and to Gypsies
I will never speak again."

This tale, as soon as Anna made a pause,
Received from all the comp'ny loud applause.
"A masterpiece!" said Hermes. Then he called
Upon Gulnare. She from a hammock crawled,
Took Anna's seat, and when the company
Attentive was, she spoke melodiously.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

A SEA-DREAM.

Full of the green-hued wonder of the sea,
And love and art's defeat, my tragedy.

From Athens, ev'ry year, through summer seas,
There sailed a youthful sculptor, Orades,
To his far-distant island-studio,
'Round which the cypress, rose and myrtle grow.
One summer to this island also came
A handsome Irish woman, whose sweet name
Was Nora, and who at a friend's one night
Met Orades and both loved at first sight.
The youth perceived in Nora's form and face
The beauty, sadness, weirdness, of her race.
At once inspired, he begged her, when alone,
To pose for "Erin" which he'd cut in stone.
The lady said she would, providing she
Could steal away from friends successfully.
Next day, pretending to go out for flow'rs,
She to the studio came and posed for hours.
They talked about themselves while he, in clay,
Upon her features worked, now grave, now gay.
And ere they parted they each other knew
As friends of many years acquaintance do.
She started homeward, watched by Orades,
Down a straight gravelled lane of cypress trees.
The sun was setting and she could behold,
At the lane's end, the far sea, blue and gold.
But where she walked was twilight cool and gray,
And leisurely she went upon her way,

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Moving with stateliness her sandalled feet,
Looking before her with a smile sad-sweet.
She clasped in one hand, that beside her swung,
The elegy on Keats by Shelly sung.
And in the other at her breast, she bore
A large red rose; its mate her black hair wore.
She dressed in classic Grecian style to please
The fancy of poetic Orades.
And as her chaste, calm form grew less and less,
He turned and wept, but why he could not guess.
In ev'ry Irish woman is a witch.
And when to this you add a nature, rich
In ev'rything that means nobility,
As Nora had, her charm is plain to see.
And of her beauty, and intelligence,
Her knowledge, cheerfulness, and eloquence,
He formed such high opinions, justly raised
That thus, while walking 'round, her kind he praised.

The Irish woman! Poets, overname
The wide world's beauties you have given fame,
And form, and feature, in such rhymes of gold
You make men wish the times were backward rolled
That they might, for one only moment, see
In flesh the model of your rhapsody,
Though ever after they were stricken blind,
Still one more lovely I'll in Erin find.

The Irish woman! Chronic'lers, record
The loyalty of woman to her lord
In spite of all temptation man invents
To cause her break a bond that God cements.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And though 'tis writ that she might faithful be
She suffered death with long-drawn agony,
And all men, reading, call the tale untrue,
I will believe while Erin's wives I view.
The Irish woman! To her wisdom cling.
Fit counsellor to cottager or king.
To doors locked in man's face she has the key.
When it is darkest she can farthest see.
She is a sybil, as the non-Celt feels,
And to the over-soul in man appeals.
When saints and sages fail to calm your woes,
Sit at her feet, your soul shall gain repose.

To Orades came Nora, day by day,
And always found a compliment to pay
The sculptor, who assured her, positive
His work forever as great art would live.
She said her love for Erin was so great
That if he thought he better could create
This statue if the model were more fine,
She would, despite the fame she'd lose, resign.
In her blue eyes astonished gazed the youth
At her unselfishness and said, with truth,
That not in Ireland or in Greece could he
A model get more typical than she.
So time went on. One day a little note
She by a servant sent, and in it wrote
That she was ill, nor should he come to her,
Nor answer give the note's deliverer.
Great was his grief. What caused her to be ill?
He asked a friend to both. A little chill.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

He asked why at her house he should not call.
The friend replied: "They hate you." That was all.
That night, however, through the forest gloom
He stole, and climbed up to his lady's room.
Upon the pane he tapped. The nurse drew wide
The window, and he partly leaned inside.
"O, Orades," said Nora, "go away!
If you are seen my guardians will you slay.
Let not base fools get famous killing you.
Nurse, put my hand in his, and now, adieu!
Go! Go! You know not how they you despise.
They say at twenty-five I should be wise.
And that you are too young for such as I,
And call me indiscreet and of me lie."
Said Orades: "Endeavor to endure.
We two are conscious that our love is pure,
I have but kissed your cheek." "I know," said she,
"But villains ever fancied villainy.
Take Shelley's Adonais, love, and go.
If I get well we things will order so—
No matter, take the book. Nurse, give the book.
I've noticed you with longing at it look."
He nearer leaned and kissed her hand, and went.
The next day reading Shelley's rhyme he spent.
And, turning o'er a page, blew off a hair
That from him soared and fell he cared not where.
But had he watched it to its landing place
He would have seen it fall into a vase
Of gold-fish, that by it were terrified,
And dashed against the vase on ev'ry side.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The next day, musing still on Shelley's verse,
There came to him a letter from the nurse.
All pale he grew, and trembled as he read.
Then broke out weeping, for his love was dead.
He walked about the room, the note in hand.
At last he by the gold-fish took his stand.
"Alas!" he said, "she fed you, loved you, now——"
A look of wonder came across his brow.
A little serpent played among the fish.
How happened it to get within this dish?
So black! So thin! 'Twas like a woman's hair.
At once he of the truth became aware.
He saw where he had blown this hair and saw
It changing to a snake by unknown law.
At first he thought to kill this thing were best,
And then he feared its progress to arrest.
He nervous grew and wished for company.
And then rejoiced that none were there to see.
At last, reflecting that this creature had
Its origin in Nora, he grew glad.
A poor thing, and a vile thing, to be sure.
Yet would it help his misery to cure.
For 'twould remind him of his love. Nay, nay.
It was his love come back another way.
And now to study its development,
To Athens for a silver tank he sent,
And in it put the serpent, after he
Had filled it full of water from the sea.
Each day he fed it, and each day it grew.
From black it slowly turned to green in hue.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And soon the head began to change, and, lo!
He saw the head of Nora on it grow.
Soon to the waist he had her duplicate.
But there she paused recovering human state.
Her lovely legs and thighs became a tail,
Formed like a fish's, clad in shining scale.
Now Orades had half a love indeed.
But with a pang he saw she should be freed
He could not keep her and he saw her rise
And look out to the sea with wistful eyes.
She could not speak, but to the youth inferred
That she could understand his ev'ry word.
So thus he, on the last day, her addressed
While she looked at him on her side at rest.

"Today you gain the freedom of the sea.
There is no phrase has such immensity.
You start a new existence, stranger still
Than any you as woman could fulfill.
You'll meet odd creatures, half like what you've
known,

The other half bred in the sea alone.
Huge beasts that never leave the ocean floor
Will rise up in the mud and at you roar.
Weird shapes, unknown to all mythology,
Will offer to conduct you round the sea.
What you will think a hill, tree, cloud or rock,
Will compliment you, or derisive mock.
Earth's learning there is useless, you will need
New language, culture, etiquette and creed.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

You will make many errors, being strange.
Have patience and submissively meet change.
Your life spreads out before me, and to me
There come these panoramas of the sea.

Thunder and lightning, roaring wind, and rain,
And darkness on a lost place of the main.
Then suddenly the scene is set anew
And I a sunset after tempest view.
Soon whales come forth that hid deep from the
 storm,
And in a double row far-reaching form.
Behind them crowds the rabble of the brine,
That for good places fight and hiss and whine.
This is a nightmare mob, defying pen
To draw; seen but by me and drowning men.
And now rolls forth the pageant of the sea.
Between the whale-guard float voluptuously
The sirens, singing, nymphs, with sharks in rein,
And sea-boys with sea-horses by the mane.
The great sea-serpent passes. After him
The Kraken shambles forward, gaunt and grim.
Now follow tritons blowing horns, and now
Mermen and maids with garlands on their brow.
Then from the nightmare mob goes up a cry.
All look one way, and, hand in hand, see I,
Yourself and merman lover, while about
Sea-cupids flutter and this ditty shout:
 'When the storm raged where were we?
 At a marriage 'neath the sea.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

That these two may happy be
Till the sea's dry wish all we.'
And thus against a wild and flaring sky,
In triumph, this procession passes by.
And when you and your lover reach the end,
There is a halt, and then you all descend,
Time keeping with the sun, in loud uproar,
And in the sea live happy evermore.

You shake your head, 'Not so.' Nay, let us then
The world of monsters leave for phantom men.
Consider this: Since time began to be,
Young, handsome men have perished in the sea.
Young men who me in ev'ry way surpass,
Though me you thought a young Greek god. Alas!
Each century, each age, has drowned its share.
And all those young Apollos still are there.
I tremble when I see in aggregate
The shipwrecked chivalry of ev'ry state,
Of ev'ry age, step forth that you may view
At once the youth of all time come to woo.
You will be wooed by kings whose continents
Were sunk before our histories commence.
By poets, who on lyres to you will play;
Their sea-pain, and land-longing, charmed away.
By young philosophers who'll see at last
That Beauty is Time's learning all amassed.
Sunk statues of the gods will come to life,
Such virtue has the sea, and claim you wife.
You will be wooed by divers—ha! What's seen

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

In vision? Ancient Carthage, and her queen?

Beneath an open, purple tent sits she.
Before her swells the sunlit tropic sea.
She is enthroned upon the yellow sand.
She is all naked, and behind her stand
Black, green-clad hand maids. Red-girt Africans
Her lovely body fan with peacock fans.
Her hair spreads out behind her, dark as night,
And in her crown great jewels flash with light.
She sits erect upon a tiger's skin,
Its head lies flat, the teeth bared far within.
A taloned paw each side its head is placed,
Upon its ears her bare white feet are braced.
Beneath its paws, out to the dark blue sea,
A red rug leads with gold embroidery.
Her jeweled hands her ivory throne-arms grip.
She watches with tense eyes, and twitching lip,
The ocean where a sunken vessel rests
Containing rubies, sent for love, in chests.
From small boats, one by one, white divers leap.
But strike hid rocks and die within the deep.
But one of all the youthful divers drowned,
In phantom form the chests of rubies found.
He's kept them safe and these to you he'll give
When in the sea you come with him to live.
Again you shake your head, 'Not so.' Again
I've cause to jealous be of phantom men.

I watch you settle, facing miles of sea,
Observing all with curiosity.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

With admiration you keep sinking till
You reach the ocean's floor where all is still.
You glide along and see a man-of-war,
And then swim boldly in the cabin door.
There sits an Admiral. With joyous cries
He locks the door, and you in wonder eyes.
Against the ceiling you swim 'round and 'round.
But openings for escape cannot be found.
But you've been seen by other officers.
The Admiral their envious hate incurs.
To him a challenge from their ships is hurled.
And then the sunken navies of the world,
Of ev'ry age, and flag, rise and take sides.
See how your beauty the great sea divides!
And now the battle rages in deep-sea.
One day you are the Persians' property.
Another day by Romans you're possessed,
And then of Greeks, Danes, Saxons, you are guest.
You are, because of vict'ries and defeats,
In turn the trophy of a thousand fleets.
Great empires of the sea are overthrown.
Its map is changed, its boundary lines unknown.
The whale-paths that since Adam have been used,
Get shifted so the oldest whale's confused.
All business, till a sea-peace, is deferred.
Go where you will, your name alone is heard.
And thus the war continues, years and years,
And still the kings cry out for volunteers.
This cannot last. The kings a truce declare,
And meet in parliament in upper air.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Beneath a high, white moon, up cliffs of chalk,
From sea the kings with crowns, robes, scepters,
walk.

Each king is pale as death in face and robe,
Despite the work of dyers of the globe.

A king an end to war proposes thus:

'The sea-maid to the youth most valorous.'

He then rehearses all brave deeds at sea,

And soon upon a youth they all agree.

They then return. Old sea-lines are restored.

You and the youth with cheers are put aboard

A war-ship, and, as bells each vessel rings,

You two receive the homage of the kings."

She shook her head, "Not so." Now darkness fell,
And still was all the isle as in a spell.

At sea a yellow moon began to rise,

Half hidden by the waves, of monstrous size

With labor Orades dragged to the bank

His idol, in her lidded, silver tank.

His little boat was near and in it he

His burden pulled and rowed far out to sea.

He stopped, removed the cover. She leaped out,

And, while he stood and watched her, swam about.

At last he motioned her approach the boat,

And kneeling, kissed her mouth, and cheeks, and
throat.

He grasped the oars, but dropped them quick, and
stood.

Far-off, upon the dim lit sea, he could

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Strange, shadowy forms half see, now rise, now hide.
They felt her magnetism charge the tide.
She also saw these terrors far away,
And looked at Orades with such dismay,
That he leaped out, and with his arms around
Her neck and waist, went down with her and
drowned.

Gulnare was much applauded. Helen next
The doctor, 'mong the Indians, took for text.

THE MEDICINE-MAN.

This happened in Apache-land.
A youthful warrior of that band
Of Indians with the daughter of
A wealthy chieftian fell in love.
But vainly so, for, though the maid
Returned his love and often prayed
Her father that she might him wed,
The chieftain "Never!" always said.
Bear-Charmer was the young man styled,
Because one day, while still a child,
They found him playing Indian airs
Upon a reed to listening bears.
I'll draw him. He was seventeen.
Twice on the war-path he had been.
But four times must Apaches fight
Ere they to council seats have right.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

For ornament he loved to wear
Three eagle feathers in his hair.
His hair was banged in front, the rest
Upon his shoulders lay undressed.
His loin-cloth was of buffalo skin,
Without design, dressed soft and thin.
'Twas folded twice, knee-long, so wide
He slept beneath it when outside.
His moccasins had tops so high
They could be pulled up to his thigh.
These by Apaches must be worn
Because of cactus, brush and thorn.
Around his neck and wrists he hung
The tusks of bears on sinews strung.
No tattoo marks his red skin bore,
Nor did he paint, except for war.

Blue-Eagle was the maiden's name,
Because, when to this world she came,
'Twas said an eagle of that hue
Around her lodge that morning flew.
I'll draw her too, this desert child,
This red-skinned beauty of the wild.
In deer-skin garments gayly dressed,
I'll show her looking at her best.
Her hair was parted, drawn behind
Her ears, then forward, unconfined.
In both her ears were copper rings
From which hung colored beads in strings;
Around her neck were two loose strands
Of colored beads. Two wide, flat bands

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Of yellow beads her bracelets made,
With blue-bead eagles-heads inlaid.
She wore a yellow, red-fringed skirt,
A yellow, sleeveless, cape-like shirt.
Her arms were screened by sleeve-long fringe
Of deerskin made, and red in tinge.
Around her skirt, about a foot
Below her waist, red fringe she'd put.
'Neath this a flying eagle blue
Her tribe's historian for her drew.
Her moccasins were blue and long;
Above her knees tied with a thong.
White beads, in diamond-shaped design,
Were down their fronts stitched in a line.
Across her shirt, from neck to waist,
Shell pendants of bright hues were placed.
And thus, unpainted, untattooed,
Was she Bear-Charmer vainly wooed.

Bear-Charmer, when his suit was scorned,
Sat down and his ill fortune mourned.
He would not work, he would not hunt,
And answered questions with a grunt.
Apaches had no jails, and so
They could not their offenders throw
In prison, but, when one rebelled
Against their laws he was expelled.
Not only thus were felony,
And cowardice, and treachery,
Rewarded sternly, but no less
Was meted out to laziness.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Bear-Charmer, keeping still his tent
While others on the war-path went,
Or ponies broke, or followed game,
His case before the council came.
There 'twas decided he should be
Rowed down the Gila, and set free
Without an arrow, bow or spear,
And killed if he should reappear.
Bear-Charmer was unmoved when he
Was told the justice-court's decree.
Nor ere he on a raft was placed
Bade one farewell or one embraced.
Four took him far and let him go,
Without an arrow, spear, or bow,
In silence, near a mountain side,
At dawn, and homeward steered up tid
Bear-Charmer walked until he found
A spring that bubbled from the ground.
And after drinking in the shade,
Lay down and plans for future made.
Why not in this vicinity
Remain and make a home, thought he?
He looked about and could not find
A thing displeasing to his mind.
In woods of cedar, pine and fir,
He heard the wings of turkeys whirr.
Bear-tracks he saw, and he could hear,
Near-by the challenge of a deer.
With his location satisfied
He rose and searched the mountain-side

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

For flint of proper shape and kind
From which, on stones, a knife to grind.
This night he in the bushes spent.
He next cut pine poles for a tent,
And when his wigwam rods were set
He lapped on bark to keep out wet.
And now he thought to make a spear
And kill a bear whose den was near,
For hide and sinew, not for meat;
For few Apaches bear-flesh eat.
And so from ash he made a shaft,
And with fine roots contrived to haft,
Upon one end, chalcedony
Which he had pointed patiently.
The bear he tracked and quickly killed.
Then, skinning it, the hide part filled
With sinew, and, for ornament,
He took its teeth, and homeward went.
He now could do things properly.
His bow, cut from a cedar tree,
(For cedar needs no seasoning)
With sinew he could back and string.
His present wants to satisfy
He arrows made of reeds close by.
And that the prey might faster bleed
Cut channels down three sides the reed.
Good arrows he would make in fall
From dog-wood sprouts, best wood of all.
With bark on they're in bundles tied,
Skin-wrapped, and hung in tents till dried.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The stems of arrow heads he bound
Inside the shaft with sinew wound.
And sinew then the roots replaced
That 'round his spear-point he had laced.
And all these days for sustenance
He'd gathered berries, roots and plants,
But, though he could have, ate no fish.
They are not an Apache dish.
But now, with arms equipped at last,
On all loved game he broke his fast.
He in one vessel made of clay
Cooked meat, roots, nuts, Apache-way.
And now Bear-Charmer, seemingly
Established well, yet could not be
At ease, though to his fate resigned.
He many times felt "poor in mind."
What did he wish? Food, wigwam, arms?
To gaze upon Blue-Eagle's charms?
To see his people? Dance, smoke, pray?
He could not with decision say.
He felt a craving measureless
Himself in some way to express.
His soul was bursting, yet 'twas dumb.
And what should be its medium?
His flute! For music he'd a gift
But not once used since cast adrift.
Again a reed! Again such airs
As he in childhood played to bears!
Then searching he a reed to suit
His purpose found and made a flute.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And with the desert for a view
Such tones as mean these words he blew.

SONG.

Soon sets the sun upon Apache-land,
And I am far from home.
Who looks across those blazing seas of sand,
And wonders where I roam?
Who now unhappy sits alone, within
Her wigwam's little shade,
And watches o'er the dust the night begin?
My own Apache maid!

I know that when the ponies lift their heads,
And forward point their ears,
She with them looks to see who homeward treads,
Suspicious till he nears.
I know that when among the yucca plants,
At eve, a lone wolf steals
She stops the dogs that sight it, lest, perchance
Gray skin her love conceals.

Some come from battle and their scalp-locks wave
While dancing 'round the fire.
Some come from hunting and are counted brave,
And chiefs and squaws admire.
But I, as cunning and as bold as they,
My lodge shall never see.
While sitting in her wigwam, far away,
A maiden weeps for me.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

He then played dances wild and shrill,
And nocturnes full of longing, till
The moon rose and to silver turned
The desert that once shimmering burned.
Soon, in the middle of a theme
As dreamy as the world adream,
He heard a noise, and, rising, saw
Approach the Medicine-Man, Wolf-Jaw.
Bear-Charmer, by the moon, could see
The doctor climb up tree by tree,
In doubt, sometimes, which way to go
Because the flute had ceased to blow.
He wore an open robe, hair out,
Skull cap, with bison horns, breech-clout,
A skunk-skin bag for barks and weeds,
Gay mocassins, and strings of beads.
To guide the doctor on his way,
Bear-Charmer would a little play,
Then silence keep, till finally
The doctor could the exile see.
"Ah!" cried the doctor, "when I heard,
Far-off, your trilling like a bird,
I said: 'That is the castaway.
He only so the flute can play.'"
The doctor could not stay, said he.
He came through curoosity.
Some friends were waiting down below,
And home with them he had to go.
He said they often went at night
To gather herbs, because the light

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The full moon gives affects the plants,
And does their powers to cure enhance.
Then laughing loud he told a tale.
Bear-Charmer's face with rage turned pale.
But, while he took the story in,
He gave applause with nod and grin.
Then suddenly his knife he drew
And stabbed the doctor through and through.
Then, in the dead man's garments clad,
Bear-Charmer started homeward glad.
While going down the mountain side
The Doctor's friends Bear-Charmer spied.
He heard them say they could not stay,
Till Wolf-Jaw came, and went away.
As they departed, Indian style,
Some six or more, in single file,
He went to where they'd stood, with care,
To see what they'd been doing there.
Bear-Charmer also wished to let
The doctors out of hearing get.
So, while they down through sage-brush went,
He stood and looked with wonderment.

Here, in a high arcade of trees,
He, by the moonlight, saw with ease
The doctors had for long that night
Observed a secret, dreadful rite.
He knew that periodically
These priests performed a mystery
So sacred, that, though chieftains tried
To see, the lodge they were denied.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

And, though he could not understand
What had been done here by this band,
He thought he saw why they had come,
For this night's acts, so far from home.
He tried accounting for this scene.
And fancying what might have been
This ceremony in the shade,
He grew, he knew not why, afraid.
And, filled with fear, he left to see
How far the Medicine-men might be
Ahead of him. He wished to know
Which way, and how, they home would go.
He meant to lag behind so they
Would home precede him by a day.
He followed them until they reached
The river, where their rafts were beached.
Bear-Charmer watched them go on these,
While hiding in a clump of trees.
He saw them eastward start and went
Upon a wolf-trot toward his tent.

'Twas morning when at last within
Plain hearing of the village din
He came, and managed soon to dodge
His tribe and enter Wolf-Jaw's lodge.
When Wolf-Jaw went among the sick
A bull's-skull on his head he'd stick.
This, luckily, Bear-Charmer knew
For it would hide his head from view.
With a gourd rattle, and this mask,
He left. Soon doctors came to ask

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Why he to walk home had preferred.
Bear-Charmer did not speak a word.
The doctors did not take offense,
But moved away with deference.
They thought, perhaps, a voice had told
Him, in a dream, his tongue to hold.
He then Blue-Eagle's wigwam found,
Went in, sat down, and stared around.
With folks the tent began to fill
To see him exercise his skill.
Blue-Eagle in a hammock lay
So ill he thought she'd die that day.
No person spoke. Bear-Charmer saw
The people watching him with awe.
A pipe Blue-Eagle's father lit
And to the doctor handed it.
He smoked it with an air profound
Then slowly rose from off the ground.
A handful then of smoke he grabbed
And at it with the pipe-stem stabbed.
All thought he saw and tried to kill
The spirits that made Blue-Eagle ill.
He next, his hands, impressively,
Raised high and paused till all might see.
He then by sign-talk made it clear
Each with his palms should hide his ear.
He then walked to the maiden's side
With stately air and measured stride.
"Blue-Eagle, I am here!" he said.
She knew his voice and raised her head.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

He next placed with his finger tips
A powder on the sick girl's lips.
Her tongue protruded and took off
The powder, causing her to cough.
Bear-Charmer saw she was too weak
Her joy at seeing him to speak,
And after staring with surprise
She feebly smiled and closed her eyes.
Bear-Charmer then with actions grave
A signal to the people gave,
Which, "Take your hands off ears, now," meant.
And then through this wild service went.

He snatched a young brave's tomahawk,
And, crouching low, began to stalk
Some unseen animal around
The lodge while uttering beast-like sound.
Wolf, lion, elk, and buffalo,
He trailed in turn, beginning slow.
But as he went his speed increased,
And louder cried he like the beast,
And after ev'ry fancied chase
He stopped beside his starting place,
Blue-Eagle's hammock, and there fought
Till down to earth the brute he brought.
The people, mightily impressed,
Believed, of course, the girl possessed
Of evil-minded spirits shaped
Like those whose voice the doctor aped.
Bear-Charmer saw Blue-Eagle's eye
Grow brighter as the hours went by.

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

The powder, and his presence, gave
Vitality and made her brave.
But not till she could stand would he
Refrain from acts of jugglery.
He feared to, for he half believed
She benefit from tricks received.
Hence now new quack'ry he devised:
At well known things he looked surprised,
Made signs for all to rise, and then
Made signs for them to sit again.
Then, shaking his gourd rattle loud,
He danced an hour before the crowd,
Till suddenly with joy all cried.
Blue-Eagle leaped out to his side.
Forth sprang her father and embraced
His child, and then Bear-Charmer faced:
"Your fee! Fear not to make it high!"
"The girl!" Bear-Charmer made reply.
"You have a wife," the chieftain said.
Bear-Charmer merely bared his head.
The cheers that rose tumultuous
He silenced and proceeded thus:
"I killed Wolf-Jaw upon a hill.
He said he kept Blue-Eagle ill
That he might wealthy get through you.
He told me how to cure her, too."

CLEVELAND NIGHTS

Then said the happy chief: "Well done!
My daughter for a wife you've won.
The exile we'll restore with pride.
A feast prepare for brave and bride."

This happy ending pleased them all, and they
Went home for the last night of their long stay.

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